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Window: The Magazine of Western Washington University, 2011, Volume 04, Issue 01

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WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY WINDOW

THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

FALL 2011

Survivor's Story

WWU's Ater Malath persisted through war, starvation and heartbreak

WESTERN
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Vikings at Microsoft

Meet four alumni shaping the future of computing

Iron Heart

An Ironman champ helps kids win



SCIENCE BY MOONLIGHT

Geology Associate Professor Doug Clark's quarry is buried in hundreds of feet of ice, wedged between two high, jagged peaks in B.C.

Clark, co-researcher Eric Steig of University of Washington and other colleagues have twice spent weeks on a remote glacier near the top of Mount Waddington, the highest peak in B.C.'s Coast Range, using a 4-inch core drill to extract blue cylinders of ice.

"The ice in that glacier is like a time capsule," Clark says. "It records climate change and weather events precisely, year by year and, in some



Photos by Doug Clark

cases, event by event. On the West Coast, we've only got about 100 years of instrument-supplied weather data. The information locked in that ice field could multiply our known data by an order of magnitude."

The most recent trip yielded about 460 feet of ice – only about 50 years' worth, Clark says. But it revealed such incredible details about climate and air quality that Clark and his colleagues are determined to return, with a better drill, to get at the deeper, compacted layers hundreds of feet down, where they believe the ice is centuries old.

Funded with the help of the National Science Foundation and the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Science, the work will not only help us understand the history of climate in the Pacific Northwest, but the future as well. Learning about how our region's climate has responded to past events, such as El Niño, may help us predict future effects of climate change.

Visit www.wvu.edu/window to see footage of an avalanche near the researchers' camp.



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Richard Clark ('52, '70) has not forgotten how Ford Hill, Music Professor Emeritus, gave him a chance at a new career.

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At 9, Ater Malath fled a murderous war in Sudan. At 18, he nearly starved to death in a Kenyan slum. Now 35, he's nearing his lifelong dream of a college degree and wants to use what he has learned at Western to help rebuild South Sudan, the world's newest nation.

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On the cover: Business student Ater Malath stops between classes near Red Square. Photo by Rachel Bayne.



Photo by Rhys Logan



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Message

from the President

The exceptional people of Western remind us why we're here

This may not be anything new to you, but often I am struck by the fact that Western offers an exceptional education and is made up of exceptional people from a diversity of backgrounds who go on to change the world.

In this issue of Window, you will be reading about such people, like Ater Malath, who as a child witnessed the devastation of the Sudanese Civil War. After his village was attacked, the 9-year-old Ater wandered across deserts and endured many hardships. His life story is simply incredible, demonstrating enormous courage and resilience in the face of such adversity. He will graduate with a business degree in 2012 from Western. He hopes to return to the fledgling nation of South Sudan and help his people recover from Africa's longest civil war.

Or how about Cherie Gruenfeld? The 67-year-old Western alumna, triathlete and world record-setter founded a non-profit that teaches at-risk youth about life skills by helping them participate in triathlons.

And our graduates make such a profound impact through their careers. Read about the network of Western alumni with important and influential positions with Microsoft. Their creative and innovative efforts help change the way we do our jobs and live our lives.

I mention these stories of perseverance and success against hardships because there is so much negative news about the daunting and harsh economy. Western has not been immune, banding together as a campus community to deal with deep state budget cuts.

However, it is very important that we not lose sight of what it is that Western does. Our university attracts and engages the very best, such as Ater Malath and Cherie Gruenfeld. But we also inspire the hearts and dreams of the next generation. The education provided by Western to its graduates makes a profound and beneficial impact on communities across Washington and, for that matter, across the nation and world.

Bruce Shepard



Photo by Dan Levine



Window

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Window supports Western's commitment to assuring that all programs and activities are readily accessible to all eligible people without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or veteran's status.

This publication is available in an alternate format. For information, call (360) 650-3350.



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What do you think about WINDOW?

If something you read in Window sparks a memory, question, inspiration or critique, let us know! We'll run a sampling of your feedback in each edition. Send your thoughts to window@wwu.edu. Or, find us online at www.wwu.edu/window and on Facebook. You may also send a note to Window Magazine, Office of University Communications, 516 High St., Bellingham, WA, 98225-9011.

We asked; you answered

Did you get an invitation from Window magazine earlier this year, asking for your opinion about Western Washington University's magazine? We surveyed many of you to find out what you like about Window and how we can improve.

Your responses, hundreds of them, inspired and challenged us.

We learned that Window magazine gives more than 75 percent of you a stronger feeling of connection to Western. We also learned that about 80 percent of you, including younger readers, want to receive Window in a print format. That includes about 23 percent who want to read Window online (www.wwu.edu/window) in addition to the print format.

Meanwhile, more than two-thirds of you called us "good" or "excellent" in areas such as writing, photography, content and design. We're gratified that we meet the high expectations of so many readers, but we'll continue to challenge ourselves to win over the rest of you.

Finally, here are some of your thoughts about what you like about Window magazine:

- "The photography is beautiful. The articles are good and improving with each issue."
- "Seeing that the school I attended is still doing exciting things. It makes me proud to have graduated from Western."
- "Fairly sophisticated publication – makes me feel good about my child going to Western."
- "That it is the occasional 'Hi' and update that I don't have to seek out. It's mailed to my house and I can pick it up and read it when I have time."
- "Gives me a great sense of pride to have attended/graduated from the university and provides incentive to speak highly of the institution and its programs."
- "Literally, a window on the world my daughter inhabits."

If you were one of the hundreds who responded to our survey, thank you for helping us improve Window. And if you haven't yet been asked for your opinion, watch your email inbox – you may get your chance! We plan to offer our anonymous survey again soon.

More at www.wwu.edu/window:

- How Business student Ater Malath brought his siblings from Africa, even after Immigration officials initially denied their request to come to the U.S.
- Geology Associate Professor Doug Clark's video footage of an avalanche near his mountaintop research camp in a remote part of British Columbia.
- "Hymn and Praise for Students," a heartfelt message about what's really important, from Professor Emeritus of Geography Jim Scott, written days before he died in July 2011.

Want to go paperless?

Our recent readership survey shows that about 20 percent of you would prefer to read Window only online. If you're one of them, email windowmagazine@wwu.edu and let us know. We'll remove you from the Window address list and send you an email when the new edition is online.

Inaugural President's Award presented to Jack and Jo Ann Bowman

Retired pharmaceutical executive **Jack Bowman** ('54, Music) and his wife Jo Ann are the first recipients of The President's Award, Western's highest community honor, for their philanthropy at the university and the wider community.

Since moving back to Whatcom County after Jack Bowman retired as head of Johnson & Johnson's worldwide pharmaceutical and diagnostic divisions, the Bowmans have become highly engaged in the life of Western, the alma mater of at least 24 of their relatives. The couple established the Daniel L. Bowman Presidential Discretionary Endowment, which funds everything from student scholarships to instruments for the Viking Band. They also sponsored President Shepard's 100 Community Conversations, engaging more than 1,000 alumni, parents, elected officials and community leaders.

And the couple's strong support for the Bowman Family Distinguished Scholars in Leadership, the Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership and the Bowman Distinguished Professorship in Leadership creates many opportunities for Western students to prepare to take the lead in their careers and communities.



Photo by Tore Ofteness

Jack and Jo Ann Bowman, longtime supporters of Western and other important organizations in Whatcom County, were presented with The President's Award at Summer Commencement.

In addition to their assistance to Western, the Bowmans also support critical nonprofit organizations in Whatcom County, such as the Whatcom Community Foundation, Boys and Girls Clubs, St. Joseph Hospital and the Whatcom Museum of History and Art.

Faculty develop apps for learning Spanish, German, mathematics

People all over the world who want to begin learning Spanish or German now have a chance to learn from two Western professors.

Modern and Classical Languages associate professors Sandra Alfes and Paqui Paredes Méndez both released language-learning apps this year through Study by App.

Alfes' "German for Beginners" includes three hours of lectures and images to introduce users to German language and culture through the life of a fictional German teenager in Berlin. "When I designed it, I had it with someone in mind who hasn't studied German before," Alfes says. It may also be helpful as a quick reference guide for students whose classroom instruction is all in German, but want help in English, Alfes says.

Paredes wrote "Everyday Spanish: Basic Grammar Review" to help students who need a handy refresher to brush up on essentials they learned in previous courses. She got the idea from her partner, Western math instructor Eric Kean, who last year developed apps for pre-calculus and AP sta-

tistics for Study by App.

Paredes thinks more and more teaching materials will come in digital form. "I do think 10 or 15 years down the road, we'll be seeing purely online textbooks," she says. "For a lot of courses, students won't be buying a paper textbook, they'll all have a tablet and will have textbooks downloaded to that tablet."



Photo by Lillian Furlong/The Western Front

Associate Professor Sandra Alfes developed an app for students of beginning German.

But at least for now, it's difficult to require students to use the apps in class, says Alfes, because while the apps themselves cost only \$3.99, they can only be used on iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad devices, which not all students can afford. But that doesn't keep scholars from exploring new ways to use technology as a teaching tool.

"We're always trying to look at ways to incorporate technology into the classroom so students can achieve better proficiency in the skills we teach," Alfes says.

Brown, Porter, Gruszecki and women's rowing bring home national titles

One national championship would end the year on a high note. But four – in one weekend – culminated a fantastic year for Western Athletics.

The streak began on May 26 when senior Sarah Porter won the 10,000-meter race at the NCAA Division II National Outdoor Track and Field Championships. It was a sweet first-time national title for Porter, a senior studying Kinesiology-Sport Psychology, who has appeared at national meets a school-record 12 times, four each in cross country, indoor track and outdoor track.

Porter's time of 33:17.39, the fourth-fastest in NCAA II history, broke her own school and conference records, and even broke meet and stadium records. Porter, who also holds school records in the 1,500, 3,000 and 5,000, recently signed with Reebok and ZAP Fitness and ran her first marathon in New York City, placing 22nd in the women's division.

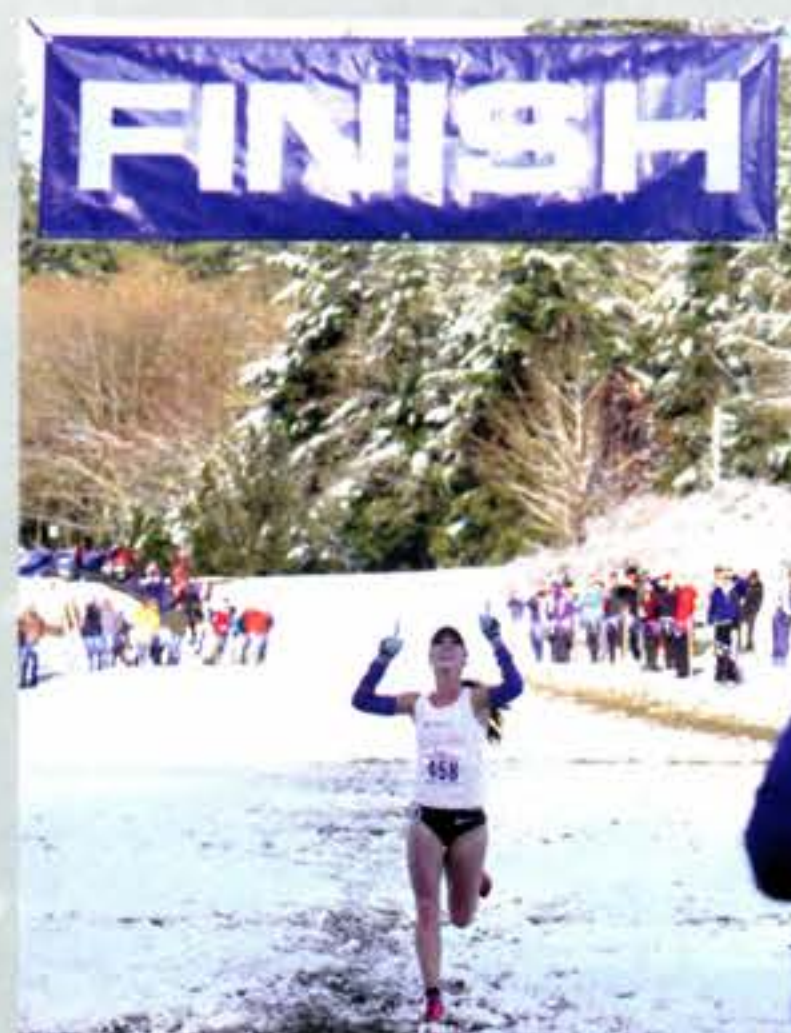
Two days later at the same championship event, Porter's teammates **Ryan Brown** ('11, Kinesiology-Pre-Healthcare Professions) and **Monika Gruszecki** ('11, English Literature, German) each won national titles. Brown's pole vault title was his fourth – he also won back-to-back indoor national titles in 2010 and '11. His winning height was 17-1 3/4 and he hopes to try for a spot on the 2012 Summer Olympic Team.

Gruszecki's javelin title was her second, after winning the national championship her freshman year. Her school-record toss of 163-6 was better than her previous best by more than 6 1/2 feet.

"You don't feel a thing when you hit it just right," says Gruszecki, who has dual citizenship and hopes to qualify for the Polish Olympic Team.

The next day, the weekend ended with a decisive victory by the women's rowing team, which brought home its seventh straight national title and continued the longest national title streak in any NCAA rowing division. For the first time in three years, both the four and eight shells won their grand finals, and by wide margins.

Western is now tied for the longest active string of NCAA II men's and women's national titles. Drury University in Missouri has also won seven straight national titles, in men's swimming and diving.



Sarah Porter, seen here at the 2010 NCAA Division II West Regionals, placed 22nd in the women's division of the New York City Marathon.



Ryan Brown, left, and Monika Gruszecki, below-left and below, are national champions.



Western's women's rowing team, above, is now tied for the longest active string of NCAA II national titles. Sarah Porter, left, in blue, won her first national title.

Beyond borders: Canadian-American Studies marks 40 years



Canada and the U.S. may be “children of a common mother,” according to the inscription on the Peace Arch, but their complex relationship has kept Western’s Center for Canadian-American Studies busy for 40 years.

The center, which celebrated its 40th anniversary this year, is federally funded as a National Resource Center for teaching, research and outreach on Canada and Canada-U.S. relations. It’s also known as one of the top places for undergraduate study of Canada and its dynamic relations with the U.S., says Donald K. Alper, a political science professor who is the center’s director.



The center promotes teaching and research involving about 35 WWU faculty whose work touches on U.S.-Canada relations, from business climate to wildlife migration. And CanAm’s K-12 Study Canada pro-

gram draws teachers from around the U.S. to learn about Canada’s history, culture, geography and government to share with their own students.

Meanwhile, the affiliated Border Policy Research Institute influences policy makers on both sides of the border. For example, BPRI research on lane configurations at the Blaine crossing may lead to faster crossings for trucks. And data gathered by student researchers at the border may help the U.S. and Canada promote their trusted traveller programs, Alper says.

Alper himself is often sought out by international media to discuss relations between the two countries. The northern border

has many of the same problems as the southern border, such as concerns about illegal immigration, smuggling and drugs, Alper says. Plus, he adds, the U.S. government worries – perhaps unfairly – that terrorists are more likely to come through the northern border than the southern.

“That’s a complex issue that calls for serious and sober-minded thinking, and not just knee-jerk jingoism,” Alper says. “Canada being our largest trading partner, anything that even interferes a little bit with the ease of passage of goods and people has a huge economic impact.”

These days, Alper’s research focuses on how the U.S. and Canada can work more in partnership, rather than separately, on things like improving cross-border movement of people and goods and sharing security-related information.

“It’s tricky on both sides, but it has to be done,” he says. “I think our goal should be to improve the border as a gateway – and not as a barrier.”



Political Science Professor Donald K. Alper, director of the Center for Canadian American Studies, is interviewed by a Canadian film crew for the documentary “Borderline.” Alper is often sought as a media source for expertise on relations between the U.S. and Canada.

Fairhaven's Montoya-Lewis joins a national panel on juvenile justice

After more than a decade as a tribal judge to more than 10 tribes across the West, Raquel Montoya-Lewis, an associate professor in Western's Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies, has accumulated a vast body of knowledge about the juvenile-justice system in Indian Country that she knew, if given the chance, could be used to forge real change.

"Every tribe is different and unique. But there are also similarities there, across the spectrum, that need to be addressed, can be addressed, if they are made a priority," she says.

Now, on a national stage, she has gotten her chance. Montoya-Lewis has been appointed to the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice; the 14-member panel represents geographical areas or stakeholder groups, with Montoya-Lewis representing the interests of Native Americans. The committee reports directly to President Obama, Congress, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

First, the committee will recommend priorities for the few federal resources available. Montoya-Lewis says she will also urge the group to tackle issues such as handling low-level offenses such as truancy and running away from home without detention, as well as the growing epidemic of domestic-minor sex trafficking.

"There is a disproportionate number of Native American youth in our juvenile-justice system. The numbers, overall, may be relatively low, but taken as a percentage, they reflect a system in which Native Americans are overrepresented," she says. "I want to work to understand more about why that is happening."

Montoya-Lewis, an Air Force brat, was born in Spain and moved around the world as her father's assignments required. But no matter which base school she was attending or which language was spoken around her, she always found a sense of home at, the Pueblo of Isleta, her father's tribe, and the Pueblo of Laguna, her grandmother's.

When, after college, she accepted a role as the judge for the Pueblo of Isleta, it was a lesson in reality that has helped shape her future.

"The tribe is exceedingly patrilineal – it just wasn't part of their social makeup to accept judgments from a young woman," she says. "But that very tough experience helped push me into realizing that what I'm really interested in is the systems themselves, from the top down, because that is how I can effect the most change. And this federal appointment will really help me do that."

Montoya-Lewis also serves on the Washington Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice and is a graduate of Georgetown University's prestigious Center for Juvenile Justice Reform. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of New Mexico and both her master's degree in Social Work and juris doctor from the University of Washington. Since 2003, she has taught at Fairhaven College's Center for Law, Diversity & Justice.



When she's not serving as a judge for several American Indian tribes, Raquel Montoya-Lewis teaches in the Law, Diversity & Justice program at Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies.

A journey for water

Story by Mary Gallagher

Right: Stephanie Grow overlooks a waterfall in Ethiopia's Semien Mountains. "Just about everywhere I went, it was green," she says. "It's a very diverse climate."

Sitting in a café in rural Ethiopia, Stephanie Grow ('10, International Sustainable Development) struggled to keep up with the conversation in Amharic among three farmers, a construction manager, NGO workers and an Ethiopian-American Seattle resident.

Over a lunch of spongy injera bread and soda pop, the group heatedly discussed a plan to build a water well for the farmers' mountaintop village, also the former home of the Seattle-area family.

But then the farmers said they already had a well and didn't need a new one; they wanted a system to pump water miles up the mountain to their village. Understandable, Grow thought, but impossible without electricity.

She turned to her Seattle friend, Ruth Assefa. "We can't build this," Grow said. "If they're not behind it, no one will use it."

Then someone started talking about leeches, and the conversation sped up again.

Grow's trip to Ethiopia had really begun months before around another table, at Western's Bellingham Business Forum. Grow sat with Margaret Curtis, a partner at Wilson Engineering, which had sponsored Grow's scholarship to study international development in Washington, D.C., as a Ford Global Scholar. Small talk soon turned to Grow's passion about global health and clean water.

The summer after her sophomore year at Western, the Spokane resident had volunteered at a secondary school in Tanzania, teaching HIV/AIDS prevention. She was shocked to find classrooms full of boys: Where were all the girls? She learned that for many families in Tanzania, and in much of Africa, the daily task of collecting water falls to girls and women, who often have to walk for miles to get it. Time collecting water takes time away from going to school or earning money – and the water itself often makes people sick.

"The more I learned about water, the more I learned it's tied to everything," Grow says. "There are a lot of obstacles for girls that there aren't for boys, and in a lot of places, that's water. Think of the time that could be afforded if people weren't spending so many hours of the day getting water."

Curtis, the past president of the Western Foundation, was fascinated, and days later wondered if Grow could help her tackle a problem she had also been thinking about: How could her company, with its expertise in water systems, get more involved in international development? She offered Grow an internship with an intriguingly vague assignment to learn all she could about the best way to build water projects in developing nations.

Armed with a business card, curiosity and an outgoing nature, Grow read and wrote, attended conferences, and met many leaders in the field – as well as Ruth Assefa and her father

Right: Stephanie Grow, front-right, joined farmers from a rural Ethiopian village, a friend from Seattle and several others for lunch to discuss a clean water project for the village.

Below: A woman and a girl collect water from Lake Tana, the largest lake in Ethiopia. Stephanie Grow and Ruth Assefa met the pair on a walk along the lake. "This is how most people get water," Grow says.



"The more I learned about water, the more I learned it's tied to everything."

Assefa Teferi, Seattle residents who were learning about water issues in hopes of improving the well at their old village in Ethiopia.

One of the most important things Grow learned is it's not enough to swoop in with a checkbook, get a well built and leave. Half of all clean water projects break in the first year, she says, and are never fixed. Which is why Grow was so worried when the farmers, who are elders from the Ethiopian village, insisted they didn't need a new well.

But Grow kept asking questions, with Ruth translating for her and relaying the gist of the conversation.

"They didn't know this was going to purify the water, make it cleaner," Grow says. "They got really excited about leeches not being in the water for the cows. Your cow is your wealth. If you lose everything, you sell your cow (and start over)."

And then it became clear that the people drinking the cleaner water wouldn't get sick, either. The farmers signed on.

With a locally elected water board in the village raising funds for maintaining the well, Grow and the Teferi family established a nonprofit in Seattle, affiliated with a group in Ethiopia, to raise funds to build it. The water station will have a place for bathing and laundry, a trough where cattle can drink and a source for safe drinking water. They hope the nonprofit, Wogen Seattle, can eventually help other Ethiopians in Seattle

fund projects to improve quality of life in their native country.

Now back in Seattle, Grow is now working at PATH, an international nonprofit that helps communities around the world break longstanding cycles of poor health with the help of sustainable, culturally relevant solutions. Grow first met people at PATH through her work with Curtis at Wilson Engineering, and a six-month internship at PATH became a permanent job earlier this year. Now, some of her work involves an initiative to help companies develop meaningful partnerships with global health nonprofits.

Curtis continues to keep in touch with Grow, who recently encouraged her mentor to get more involved with International Business students at Western.

"I do feel like I'm a mentor (to Stephanie), but I learn a lot from her, too," Curtis says. "She is teeing up opportunities for us on a regular basis."

Wogen Seattle partners with Seattle's Ethiopian community and others to provide financial and technical support to projects addressing safe water, nutrition, basic health care, sustainable livelihoods and a meaningful education in Ethiopia. Learn more by contacting Stephanie Grow: sgrow@path.org

CAPTURING THE SUN

Tougher, more flexible solar panels could harness the sun's energy at less than half the cost

Story by John Thompson

Photos by Rhys Logan

Solar power and the Pacific Northwest – two terms that are mutually exclusive, right? Not if a team of researchers at Western produce what could be a game-changer in the realm of solar electricity.

Their goals are lofty: Build a completely new type of solar collector made from inexpensive plastic (gone are the large, fragile sheets of silicon-based photovoltaic cells) that not only works well on cloudy days but also produces electricity at about half the cost – or less – of current systems.

“Just think what the world could do with solar-collector systems that cut costs by a factor of two or more,” says Brad Johnson, the chair of Western’s Physics Department and a research member of Western’s Applied Materials Science and Engineering Center (AMSEC).

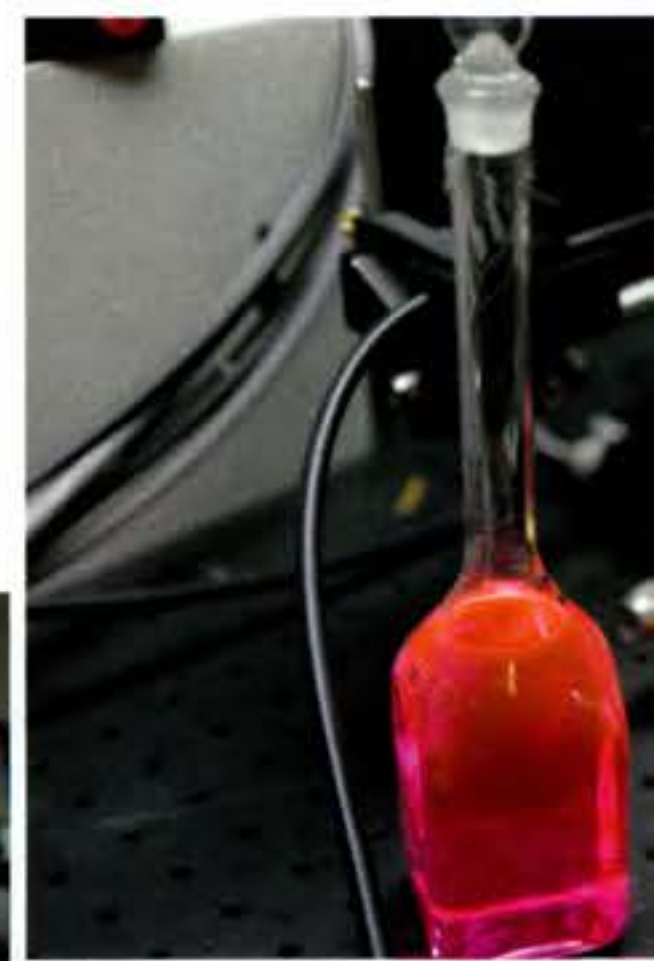
“The technology we are developing has the potential to produce solar electricity at prices approaching those of conventional non-renewable energy sources like coal and natural gas,” says Chemistry Professor David Patrick, project leader. “It’s not hard to see how, if successful, such a breakthrough could fundamentally alter the world’s energy landscape.”

The technology has fascinating and almost limitless options. Envision whole skyscrapers with “windows” that let in light as well as collect it for electricity, says Johnson. Or rugged power generators for use in the diffuse light of jungles or cloudy areas like the Pacific Northwest. Plus, these next-generation solar power collectors would be more durable and could take more of a beating than a traditional silicon array and still function efficiently.

The project is so well regarded that last year it was awarded a three-year, \$970,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to help push it along, and more funds could be on the horizon as the project continues to gain steam.

The key to the new system is the polymers and multicolored dyes used in the plastic collectors. Each color allows for the collection of light in that part of the spectrum. Experimentation over the next few years will answer questions such as how the dyes can be layered on the polymer to make collection as efficient as possible.

A prototype of the new luminescent solar concentrator



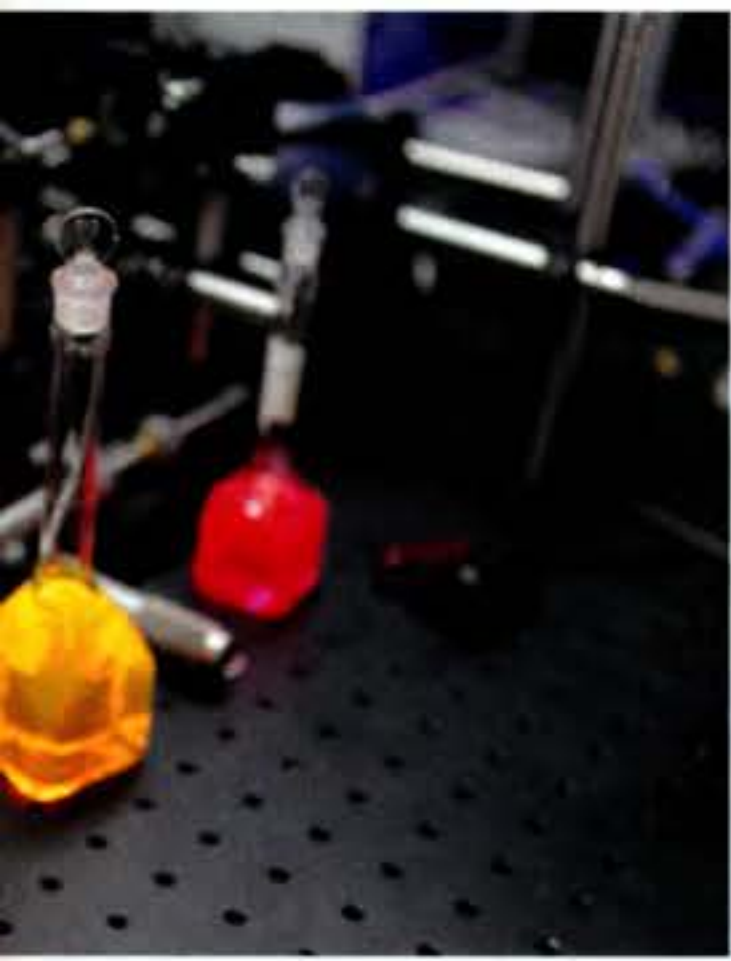
could be on a roof at Western collecting solar energy as soon as next year, Patrick says.

The AMSEC team working on the project comes from a number of departments at Western. Johnson and Patrick are working with Mathematics Associate Professor Stephen McDowall, Chemistry Assistant Professor John Gilbertson and AMSEC Assistant Professor Janelle Leger. About 15 to 20 undergraduates will have a chance to work on the project over the next two years, as well as a number of graduate students.

AMSEC, part of the College of Sciences and Technology, was founded in 2007 with support from the state Legislature with a mission to educate students in materials science, support interdisciplinary research and enhance regional industry competitiveness and innovation. It brings together faculty and students from Chemistry, Engineering Technology, Geology, Mathematics, and Physics for interdisciplinary collaboration to find solutions to complex, multifaceted problems.

Besides the solar-collector project, AMSEC is working on other research as well, from working with a polymer that could act as artificial muscle to developing nanoparticles that can relay real-time information from inside a cell within the human body.

“Working on projects like these gives our students incredible real-life experiences that are fabulous springboards to grad school and jobs in the private sector,” Patrick says. “They’re just invaluable.”



Clockwise from left: Different-colored dyes play a role in the next generation of solar energy collectors under development at Western; Chemistry Professor David Patrick is the project leader; Patrick consults with graduate students Willie Benjamin, left, and Tristan Butler.



**If they're successful,
the panels 'could
fundamentally alter
the world's energy
landscape.'**

WESTERN COULD BECOME A HUB OF SOLAR RESEARCH

The luminescent solar concentrator research at the Applied Materials Science and Engineering Center (AMSEC) is just one of the projects at Western focusing on sustainable energy and green technology.

Others include the Vehicle Research Institute's biomethane project, which turns cow manure into usable natural gas for its Honda-powered hybrid. The VRI is also at work with Kitsap Transit on a new lightweight, ultra-fuel-efficient transit bus.

And more research into sustainable energy could be on the way, says Brad Johnson, the chair of Western's Physics Department and a research member of AMSEC. It all depends on funding, as always, but future plans include:

- Building a traditional solar array of flat silicon-based photovoltaic cells atop the Technology Development Center (TDC), a waterfront-area facility leased from the Port of Bellingham, to provide baseline data in all weather conditions.
- Building a hybrid solar and wind system atop the TDC using the new luminescent solar collectors in conjunction with a traditional wind-collection system. "Typically in the Pacific Northwest it's either sunny or breezy, rarely both – or neither – at the same time," Johnson says. "This system would gather electricity from whatever source was available."
- Collaborating with the University of California system to place a sensor array atop the TDC that will be used to forecast climate data and solar availability in an effort to find stopgaps in the peaks and lulls common to solar collection due to weather patterns and the day/night cycle. This last phase of the project may actually be the first in place because it requires no outside funding.

"Given all the work we see coming on the horizon, to say we're pretty excited about the future is an understatement," Johnson says.



Julie Larson-Green , left, Keith Boyd
and Brian Daugherty and are among
hundreds of Western alumni making a
difference at Microsoft

The Western-Microsoft® connection

Story by Mary Gallagher

Photos by Mark Malijan ('09)/The Emerald Collective

Did you hear about the not-so secret network of hundreds of Microsoft employees?

Their membership includes:

- The vice president in charge of development for two generations of the Windows operating system.
- A recruiter who finds people who work in supply chain management for Xbox and Kinect games.
- The engineer who helps maintain the “marketplace” where people buy apps for their Windows phones.
- The retired executive who helped lead Microsoft through explosive growth in the '90s.

And that's just a sampling of the hundreds of Western Washington University alumni who work at Microsoft. According to WWU records, 522 alumni work at the software giant. Include parents of current students and the total number of Vikings at Microsoft rises to more than 600.

But apart from the occasional WWU sweatshirt or license plate frame, many Western alumni probably don't know how much company they have at Microsoft.

“Western alums aren't the kind that go around and advertise where they're from. They just go about their business,” says **David Cole** ('84, Applied Mathematics; '86, M.S., Mathematics), a retired senior vice president who worked at the company for 20 years. “They are smart, received a great education from Western, and get the job done at Microsoft.”

And they're not all in hiding. **Brian Daugherty** ('84, Business Administration/Computer Science), a senior software development engineer who has worked at Microsoft since 1995, says the WWU sticker on his

window attracts the attention of a few passersby.

“I've had several people introduce themselves, ‘Hey, I'm a Western grad, too,’” says Daugherty.

And while Western alums might be surprised to run into a fellow Viking at Microsoft, collectively they have had a tremendous impact on their alma mater. Since 1989, alumni, parents and friends working at Microsoft, coupled with corporate matching gifts, have contributed more than \$11 million in cash and software to Western – that's more than any other group of employees in Western's history.

Gifts that support academic programs, scholarships and student initiatives are matched by Microsoft, allowing a donation of any size to make to a substantial impact. Donations from Microsoft employees also have transformed Western by providing the latest software in computer labs throughout the campus.

“They populated our labs for years with current software that the students would not have had otherwise,” says Susan Brown, Western's software manager for Academic Technology & User Services. Microsoft



Brian Daugherty's window sticker catches the eye of other WWU alumni.

alumni also donate their time to Western on boards of directors, advisory committees and as classroom speakers. Vice President of Program Management for Windows **Julie Larson-Green** ('86, Business Administration), for example, sits on the Western Foundation

board of directors. And **Keith Boyd** ('95, Political Science), a senior content publishing manager, is president-elect of the WWU Alumni Association. And Daugherty recently spoke in several Management Information Systems classes.

Boyd, whose department writes the program documentation for Windows 8, loves it when colleagues ask him where he went to school, particularly if they've never heard of Western.

"In an environment like Microsoft, it's pretty common to run into people who went to very prestigious colleges," Boyd says. "I feel I can compete with the best in the world, based on the skills I was given at Western."

The face of Windows



Julie Larson-Green
('86, Business Administration)
Vice president of program
management for Windows

The Microsoft executive in charge of the Windows operating system first learned how to help people solve technology problems while working in Western's computer labs in the 1980s.

"Working in the microcomputer lab, that's probably where I first learned to do tech support," says Julie Larson-Green. "That and wait-

ing tables."

Today as corporate vice president of program management for Windows, Larson-Green leads a 1,000-person team designing and building Windows 8. They're "reimagining" the world's most commonly used operating system to harness the power of cloud computing and the proliferation of mobile devices.

"Computing is changing, and what people want to do with a computer is changing," Larson-Green says. "We started out on a desktop; you had to go to a place to use a computer. With

a laptop, you take it with you and set it down. Now while you're walking around and moving from place to place, you want a different way to stay connected."

Leadership track record: Larson-Green's first big project at Microsoft was to lead the team that designed Office 2007. They threw out the traditional toolbars for "ribbons" and produced the best-selling version of Office ever. Her next job: Creating the vision for Windows 7. It meant a jump from leading 13 people to 450, but the result was also a commercial success.

Managing change: "I think change for change's sake is what gets people into trouble," she says. "We're making changes based on observations on how people are using computers. We've tested these observations with real humans and we think we're on the right track. We'll continue testing until we release – that's the real test."

Handling criticism: Reviews are already coming in on Windows 8, before its release. "I definitely read it all. What I mostly look for is, is there something I haven't thought of? Is there a complaint I didn't expect? A fault I didn't foresee? That's what worries me."

Thriving on challenges: "My personality is, I like to go to the thing that scares me and overcome it," she says. "If I know I can do something, I know I'm not going to put my best into that because I know I can do that."

Western connections: Larson-Green, who grew up in Maple Falls in the Mount Baker foothills, has many family connections to Western. Her grandfather was a maintenance worker at the university and her father attended Western in the 1960s. Her husband, Seattle University Economics Professor Gareth Green, was a visiting assistant professor at Western from 1999 to 2000. And last year, Larson-Green's daughter began her freshman year at Western – both mother and daughter spent their freshman years living in Fairhaven Hall. Larson-Green is also a member of the Western Foundation board of directors.

The retired executive

David Cole ('84, Applied Mathematics; '86, M.S., Mathematics)
Retired senior vice president

Ask David Cole about what it was like to work at Microsoft in the '90s, and he'll tell you about the pickup truck full of video games.

Near the release of Windows95, one of many high-profile projects Cole led at Microsoft, programmers wanted to make sure games designed for the previous Windows system would still work. So Cole and a couple of co-workers took a pickup truck to the nearest Egghead store and bought about \$10,000 worth of computer games. Back at the Microsoft campus, they divvied up the games to take them home, play them and find

the bugs so programmers could make the new system compatible with the old games.

"I think people get inspired by that kind of can-do attitude," says Cole, who retired from the company in 2006 as a senior vice president. He's not sure Microsoft executives are still allowed to buy software by the truckload. "As the company gets bigger," he says, "you have to put more rules in place to create a balance between creativity and corporate recklessness."

Since joining Microsoft in 1986 the Monday after earning his master's degree from Western, Cole witnessed – and led – the company through monumental growth over the next two decades, playing key roles in the development of Windows and later in Internet Explorer and MSN.com. He also served three years on Western's board of trustees in the 1990s.

Motivating people: There are times to crack the whip, Cole says, and there are times to put on a pink bunny suit and make people laugh. "It's a pretty intense environment, with people working 12 to 16 hours a day or more. So you've got to blow off steam. After we shipped Windows95, there was a pickup truck load of Dom Pérignon. I think a motorcycle went around the hallways, too. I'm not going to claim I was driving it."

Online business strategist: Tapped by CEO Steve Ballmer in 2001 to run Microsoft's online business, Cole was in charge of development at MSN.com and helped the business turn a profit for the company. "I was a technical guy now running not only the technical side, but sales and marketing for the entire business, generating significant revenue. That's when I said, 'I wish I would have taken more business classes.' I encourage people in computer science to expand their horizons and take (business and management) classes. If you're successful, you're going to be a manager someday."

Future leaders: Cole's a strong supporter of leadership development programs at Western. "It would be great if people could come out of school with leadership skills developed, rather than land in corporate life and have to start from scratch," he

says. "I want to develop leadership skills, and at the same time I want a more diverse leadership workforce. I know the leadership program at Western is largely about both."

Happy retirement – for



now: Cole says he misses working with "teams of really smart people doing incredible things," but is glad to leave corporate pressures behind. At 49, he's not sure how long he'll stay retired, but for now spends a lot of time with his children, who are in their late teens and early 20s, and on his horse farm, where he and his wife train horses. He also enjoys fly fishing and spends many weeks a year fishing for steelhead and other types of fish. "When you leave a corporate job," he says, "you have to be OK with the fact that most of the things you do are important to you and your family, but not to 10,000 other people."

The explainer

Keith Boyd ('95, Political Science)
Senior Content Publishing Manager

Thousands of software developers, from basement hobbyists to the inventors of the next Angry Birds, all depend on Keith Boyd ('95, Political Science) and his team at Microsoft.

Boyd leads a group of engineers who write the tens of thousands of pages of documentation used by software developers outside of Microsoft to build programs and applications to work with Windows. His team has already released specs for the next-generation operating system, Windows 8.

"The neat thing about Windows 8 is, it will work equally well with a keyboard and a mouse as it does with touch," Boyd says. "We had to produce more or less complete documentation for this release, so developers could hit the ground running and everyone could understand how this system works."

Inspirations: "When I was student body president, it was pretty cool to know a Western grad on the Board of Trustees (David Cole) who was among the most influential people at Microsoft," Boyd says. Now he gets the same feeling about Julie Larson-Green, the vice president in charge of program management for Windows. "She's been the most visible champion for Windows over the past couple of releases. It's always inspiring for me to see her up there: Here's a Western grad that's changing the world every day."

Radio pioneer: Boyd and Microsoft recruiter Dan Contreras ('97, Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) were staff members of Western's KUGS when it became only the second radio station in the world to transmit on the Internet.

Western connections: Boyd is president-elect of the Alumni Association board. His wife, Leslie Boyd ('97, Recreation) is also a former A.S. President.



IRON HEART

Triathlon legend Cherie Gruenfeld ('66) won't give up – on herself or on the kids she coaches

Story by Claire Sykes ('81)

As the sun rose from behind the San Jacinto Mountains, Cherie Gruenfeld ('66, English/Education) pushed her weight into the pedals of her bicycle and leaned low onto the aero bars. That July 2011 morning was made for training. The wide, smooth street all to herself, Gruenfeld zipped past the gated homes of Palm Springs, Calif. "I was flying," she says. "This was going to be a good day."

Seconds later, a rock caught her front wheel, slamming her down, her bike pinning her to the pavement. A broken collar bone had crushed her plans to defend her world record in the 2011 Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii. Since 1992 she has missed only three of these events – with their 140.6 miles of swimming, biking and running – because of severe injuries.

But even though she hated sitting out the 2011 championship in October, she refuses to be defeated.

"I remain positive, and look forward," says Gruenfeld, 67, of Palm Springs. "And I always need a strong goal. I'm completely rudderless without one."

So she signed up for the May 2012 Half Ironman (70.3 miles), in St. Croix, Virgin Islands. A first-place win in her age group would qualify her for the big 2012 Kona race. In her 23 Ironman events, she has won first place in her age group 15 times. Ten of those are world championships, including the race in which she was the first woman over 55 to finish in less than 12 hours. All this, and more, put her on the box of Wheaties Energy Crunch cereal, in 2002.

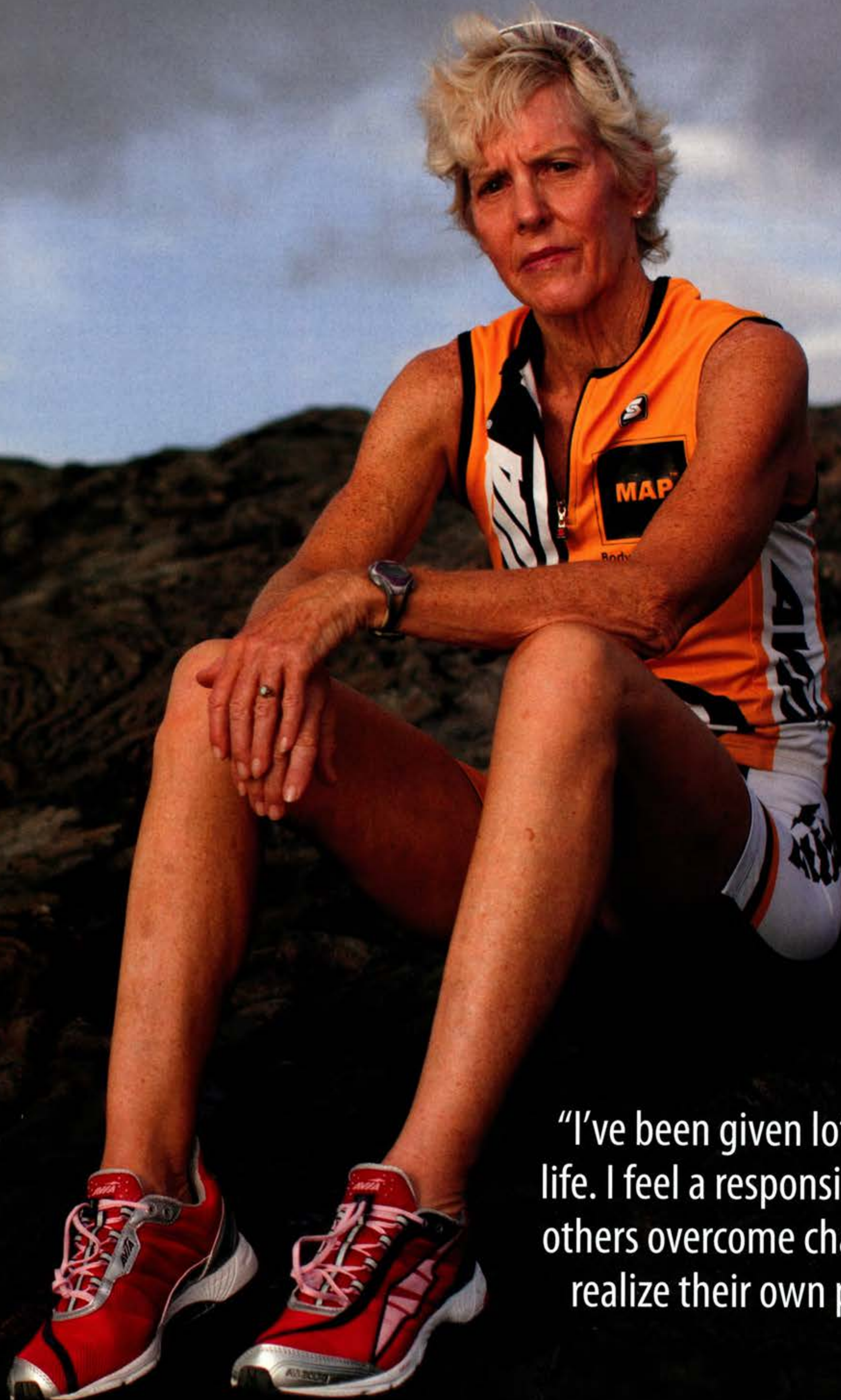
But what is she most proud of? The kids she coaches

through triathlons, in Exceeding Expectations (www.eefoundation.org). She founded the San Bernardino program that involves inner-city, at-risk kids in the sport of triathlon, helping them develop positive, goal-oriented lives with an eye toward college, whatever their dreams. In 2000, after speaking to 200 fifth- and sixth-graders about goals and racing, she asked who wanted to do a triathlon and a roomful of arms shot up. Gruenfeld chose 12 students and started EE, despite others' warnings of its futility with children they saw as hopeless. But she beat the odds with successful fundraising and her persistent, one-on-one attention to the kids, now numbering over 50. Their class attendance and grades have improved thanks to the program for which Gruenfeld received the prestigious Jefferson Award for Public Service in 2009.

She never imagined becoming an athlete, having been raised before Title IX, the 1972 Civil Rights Act amendment that finally included gender in educational activities. But growing up, she loved playing kick the can with her brothers and won swimming trophies and badminton national titles. "When I became an adult, I had a lot of competitive juices yet to use." She put them in action in the business world, with her ambitious marketing strategies and sales quotas.

But first, with her B.A.E. from Western, she taught elementary school for nine years, during which she got an M.A. in Education/Learning Disabilities from the University of Washington, and soon worked as a reading specialist. By 1975, she sought new challenges in a computer sciences degree and nine years as a software-marketing executive.

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"I've been given lots of gifts in life. I feel a responsibility to help others overcome challenges and realize their own potentials."

At a business meeting, she met Lee Gruenfeld, her husband since 1982, then a tech support manager. He says, "She just glided through the room, like a puck moving across an air-hockey table."

One Sunday in March 1986, she flipped on the TV to watch the first City of Los Angeles Marathon. "I didn't run or know anyone who did. But here were 11,000 people who had set a goal and were accomplishing it," she says. "And I'm lying around eating sticky buns."

Gruenfeld was hardly out of shape. She played tennis year-round and skied in winter, but only recreationally. She wanted something more focused. So, the next day, she bought running shoes and a how-to marathon book. By August, she was up to 20 miles, and that October ran her first marathon. "I loved it but intended to run only that one." Her finishing time qualified her for the Boston Marathon, though, and she couldn't resist. "After that, I became an amateur competitive marathon runner."

In 1991, a magazine article on Ironman made her wonder about triathlons, but she didn't have a bicycle and hadn't swum since childhood. Lee read it, too, and kept bringing it up. Pretty soon spending a day swimming 2.4 miles, bicycling 112 and running 26.2 started to appeal to her. Lee was writing his first novel, and by January 1992 he had landed a book contract. So Gruenfeld took a six-month leave of absence from work to train for the fall Ironman World Championship. After that, she never returned to the office.

Racing an Ironman: What's it like? "First of all, it's going to be a long day," she begins. "During the swim, you're feeling good. Then, on the bike, that's when the wind and heat hit you, but for the next 50 miles, you're great. You've trained for this. And you never question whether you can do it, because that takes a tremendous amount of energy. You simply know you can." Gruenfeld, who wears out a pair of running shoes every three months, takes it mile by mile, marked off by aid stations and cheering crowds.

"But at some point, it gets really tough," especially those last six miles in Kona's lava fields. "It's pitch dark and everyone's spread out and you're all alone, with only the sound of your labored breathing and your feet slapping the ground," she says. "If you have any demons, this is when they'll get you, so I have a positive mantra ready to tell myself: 'Be calm, courageous and confident.' With a mile to go, you turn onto Ali'i Drive and there's the light of civilization, and the roar of the crowd carrying you to the finish line."

Bike crashes and chlorine-bleached hair, high medical bills and hot Hawaii winds – they're all worth it to Gruenfeld, who thrives on "going far out of my comfort zone, to see what I'm made of." But she could never do it without Lee. "This is a guy who believes I can do anything. He is 100 percent supportive and totally unthreatened by my success."

As he puts it, "I love to watch Cherie race. I love the way it makes her feel. To be that close to somebody with such depth of dedication and degree of talent and commitment inspires me."



Photo by Rick Dressler/Quickshots
Cherie Gruenfeld launched Exceeding Expectations to introduce kids to the sport of triathlon.

Gruenfeld, who just got the go-ahead to start full training again, is equally inspired by the EE kids she works with. One of them is Nik Keller, a 10-year-old latchkey child in 2001 when he joined, who remains active in the program as a mentor. He says, "I was bored and needed something to occupy me. But I'd give up during triathlons. Cherie scolded and supported me in a very positive way, telling me to always finish the race, no matter how long it takes. Through EE, I learned self-determination, self-reliance and self-awareness. If I hadn't joined, I probably wouldn't be in college," says Keller, a biotechnology student at the University of California San Diego.

"My work with the kids is the most important thing I do," says Gruenfeld, a powerful role model for them. "They see that I love racing, and I still have game. I'll race as long as I can stay competitive. I've been given lots of gifts in life, and that's why I feel a responsibility to help others overcome challenges and realize their own potentials. I believe I'm here on this planet to make a difference."

Claire Sykes ('81, Community Service and the Arts) is a freelance writer in Portland, Ore., She covers the visual arts and music, health and wellness, the environment, business, travel and general interest for magazines in the U.S., Canada and abroad. www.sykeswrites.com

CHERIE BY THE NUMBERS

3

triathlon legs–swim, bike, run.

140.6

miles in an Ironman event.

15

first-place wins in Ironman events around the world.

10

age-group titles at the Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii.

1

European triathlon record she set, for 50- to 54-year-olds, in 1996.

300+

at-risk kids she has introduced to triathlons through Exceeding Expectations.

10,000

miles her bike covers each year during training.

3,000

calories, on average, she consumes each day while training (but who's counting?)

70

her height, in inches.

125

her weight, in pounds.

1

time she has appeared on a box of Wheaties.

1

rock that caught under her bicycle wheel, crashing her to the ground and delaying her pursuit of an 11th world title.

7

months until a half Ironman in May 2012, when she'll attempt to qualify for the 2012 Ironman World Championship.



THE QUEST FOR SUCCESS

Five tips to take you to the top

In her book, "Become an Ironman: An Amateur's Guide to Participating in the World's Toughest Endurance Event," (Meyer & Meyer Sport, 2008), Cherie Gruenfeld discusses the "Critical Success Factors" athletes need to make it through a 140.6-mile triathlon.

"I believe that the Critical Success Factors are basically the same in all aspects of life," says Gruenfeld. "What served me well in my days as a teacher and in business are the same principles that help me be successful as an athlete." She advises:

- Always have goals. Be passionate about them and stay focused on them. And continually track your progress against your objectives.
- Believe in yourself. Let no one tell you something is impossible. Have faith in your dreams and your ability to accomplish them.
- Don't be afraid to fail. The only failure is not trying. Let your mistakes and mishaps serve as teaching tools, and go at it again.
- Be willing to work hard. Nothing worth having comes without some effort. Put your head down and do the work.
- Never, ever give up. It may not work the first time, but keep going. If it's important enough to you, you need to stick with it, no matter what.



Photo by Rick Dressler/Quickshots

Photo by Lee Gruenfeld

The Piano Men

Story by Mary Gallagher

Photos by Martin Waidelich

Richard E. Clark ('52, Music; '70, M.A., Sociology) might have been the most nervous student in Music Professor Ford Hill's piano class that first day in 1988.

At 58, Clark was also the oldest student Hill had ever taught for college credit. Clark had fallen in love with music as a boy growing up in Blaine. A Music major at Western, he played the French horn in the college orchestra. But he was surprised to be accepted to Hill's class. Clark had played piano for years – even taught some – but he was unpolished at the keys.

"It never came easy," Clark remembers.

But playing the piano has always come easy to Ford Hill, who attended the world-renowned University of Indiana School of Music and studied under pianist Gyorgy Sebok – who traced his own musical lineage to Beethoven.

Hill, who coordinated Western's piano program for 20 years, remembers Clark worked hard to keep up with his classmates. "He didn't want any special favors," Hill says.

For the next several months, Clark absorbed all he could from Hill as if his livelihood depended on it. Actually, it did: After two careers, one as a member of the clergy and then another teaching college sociology and religion at remote Air Force and Coast Guard bases in Alaska, Clark was preparing to embark on a third career, as a nationally certified piano teacher.

"He taught me a lot," says Clark, now 81. "How to play scales, for one thing. My fingers were overlapping. He straightened me out."

Clark studied with Hill for five quarters and earned national certification in 1990. His piano teaching practice began to grow. Clark was a "nurturing and inspiring teacher," Hill says. If stu-

dents didn't have a piano, they could practice on Clark's, he says.

Clark also became a strong advocate for music in the small town of Blaine, working to

bring Western music faculty and students to perform, first at the library and then at the newly built Blaine Performing Arts Center at the high school. Western Music students arrived in Blaine by the car-load to give dry-run performances of their quarterly recitals.

Meanwhile, Hill also came to Blaine to practice with Clark's students who were preparing for rigorous exams of the Canadian Royal Conservatory of Music system.

Clark, who was also a newspaper editor who wrote a history of Peace Arch Park, located near his home in Blaine, prefers classical music. Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich is a favorite.

"He was always in trouble with the communist government, but he didn't let them stop him from composing wonderful music," Clark says.

Hill, who retired in 1996, says his old student called him in 2001 to say he was getting his affairs in order and had bequeathed his estate, mainly his house, to Western for the Ford Hill Scholarship fund.

Hill said he felt "very grateful and surprised."

Clark, who never had children of his own, later set aside part of his estate toward the purchase of a 9-foot concert grand Steinway piano, Western's first new piano in more than 30 years. Hill played the piano for the first time in public at the College of Fine and Performing Arts' annual Masked Ball; Clark, who now lives in a nursing home, made a special trip to Bellingham to be in the audience.

"It's hard for me to think of teaching the piano without Ford Hill being behind it all," says Clark, who also gave to Western his extensive collections of classical music recordings for the Music Library.

These days Clark doesn't play the piano very often. After surviving cancer and a bout with shingles a few years ago, Clark decided to leave the performing up to his students. Instead he devoted his time to writing his memoir, "Riding the Carousel with God," which he published in 2008.

He still gets frequent visits from Hill, who brings DVDs about history to keep his old friend from getting bored.

But Clark's piano isn't done teaching. It's now at Western, where it's available for music students who need a place to practice.



Richard Clark, left, and Music Professor Emeritus Ford Hill are old friends who share a love of the piano.



Richard Clark, right, never forgot how his old friend, Music Professor Emeritus Ford Hill, helped him launch a career as a piano teacher.



NEW PIANO TAKES CENTER STAGE

Just like a child prodigy, the Ford Hill Steinway Piano, Western's first new piano in more than 30 years, has some growing up to do.

With the help of fine-tuning adjustments by Western's Piano Technician David Steege, the new 9-foot concert grand will "open up" over time, says Music Professor Jeffrey Gilliam, who traveled to New York City to select the piano from the Steinway factory.

"He must bring the piano to life, based on (the acoustics of) our hall," Gilliam says.


The piano is named after Western Music Professor Emeritus Ford Hill, who directed Western's piano program for 20 years, and was purchased with the help of an estate gift of Richard Clark, a Blaine resident and one of Hill's former students.

But even now, the new piano's notes "have warm, durational staying power, almost like an organ," says Gilliam, who now teaches in the Richard E. Clark honorary piano studio.

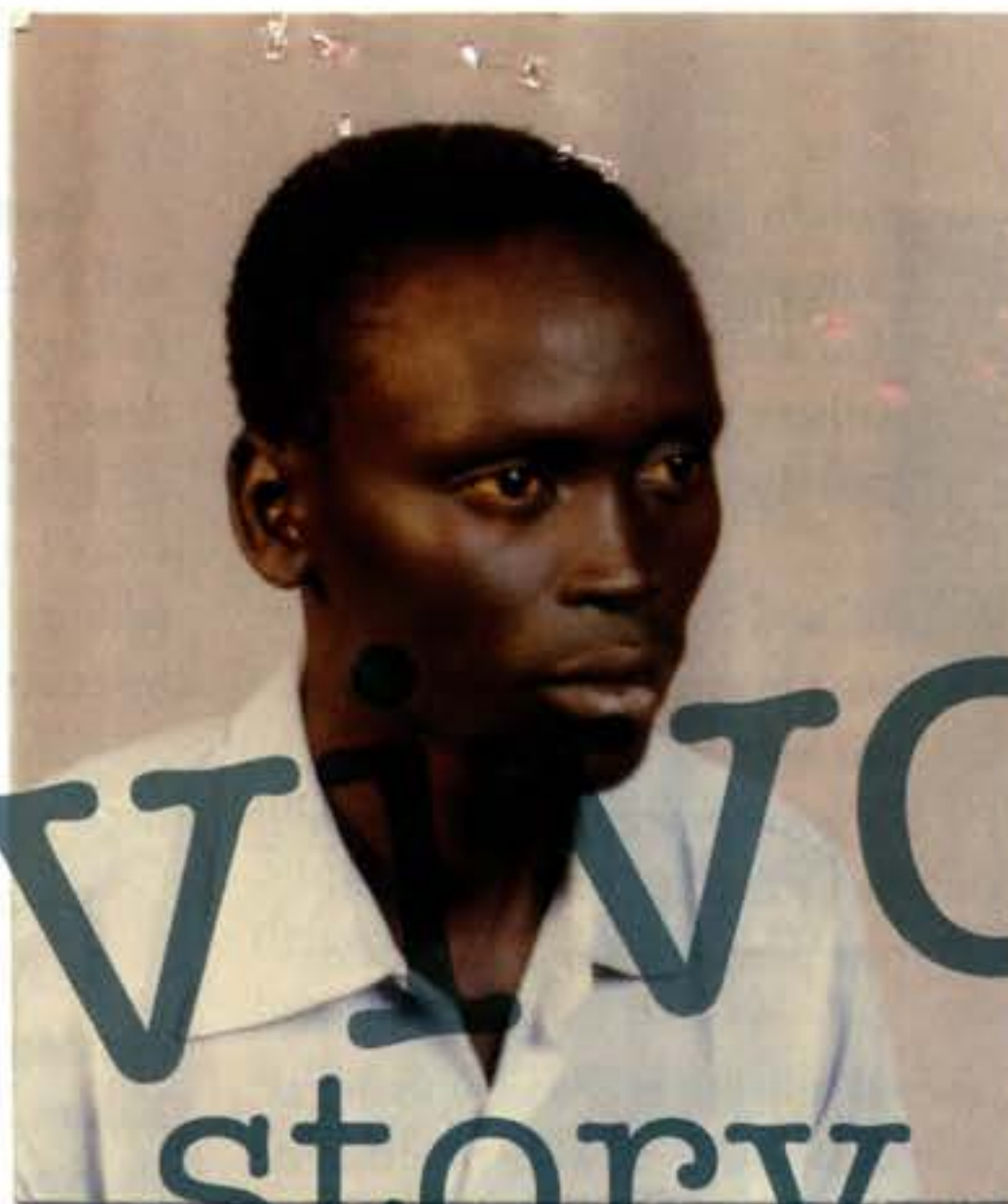
The piano is scheduled for its wider audiences this year in the Sanford-Hill Piano Series, which regularly draws accomplished pianists from around the world.

At 9, Ater Malath fled his home in what is now South Sudan and spent his childhood in refugee camps and slums before coming to the U.S. Now 35, he's on the verge of completing his Business degree at Western.





Survivor's story



Left: Ater Malath at 18, when he was living in Kibera, Kenya, one of the largest slums in the world. Malath's uncle took this photo to Malath's family in Sudan to prove to them that he had survived the Sudanese civil war.

Story by Peter Jensen ('10)

Photos by Rachel Bayne

Ater Malath wants you to know his story.

Malath, a 35-year-old business student at Western Washington University, was born in South Sudan, which gained independence in July after a civil war that spanned more than two decades, killed 2 million, and displaced more than 4 million people like him.

Malath is full of vivid stories. But if you ran into him between classes in Parks Hall, he might be quiet at first. Malath has lived in the U.S. for 16 years and has citizenship, but English is his third language; he speaks articulately but simply. He is quick with a smile that seems effortless and a laugh that comes easily – gestures that do the talking when words fail.

Malath wants to meet you and tell you about his life – about his war-torn childhood, about the refugee camps and slums, about the deliverance of emigrating to the U.S. followed by the drudgery of low-wage jobs, and ultimately about how his hunger for a college education led him to Western. And he wants to tell you how he yearns to invest his degree in economic development in South Sudan.

He wants you to know that he, like South Sudan, the world's newest country, has a future worth getting inspired about.

A Healer's Son

With his imposing physical presence and long limbs, Malath's animated movements bolster his narratives in ways simple sentences can't. The story of how he hunted a cheetah as a child becomes captivating when he demonstrates what happened when the cheetah rushed at him.

"The cheetah jumps to my right – I was scared – I just swung," Malath says, swinging his arm down like a hammer, "and CRACK! I hit it in the nostril and it fell to the ground and started scratching itself."

Malath was hunting with a group of older boys in a forested area outside his hometown of Rumbek when the cheetah attacked. After their hunting dogs subdued and killed it, one of the older boys determined that Malath

Continued on page 26

deserved its pelt – a prized possession in his culture.

But when he talks of other, violent aspects of his childhood, he gets quiet. Malath and his mother and father began to feel the brutal fallout of rebellion in southern Sudan in the early 1980s, before it became a full-fledged war against the Arab government in the north.

The rebels wanted independence, and the government violently cracked down, Malath says. He remembers a boy in Rumbek, who was in a wheelchair because of polio, was abducted and tortured to death in a government camp. Troops drove through town dragging the boy's mangled body behind an armored personnel carrier to scare people from joining the rebellion.

Malath's father, who had studied nursing and was working at a hospital in Rumbek, decided to escape the growing bloodshed by quitting his job and moving his family to a small village nine miles away called Yar.

Malath, inspired by his father to pursue an education, had attended school in Rumbek. Now living in Yar, Malath instead devoted his days to helping his family tend goats and grow crops.

That childhood ended one day in May 1985, when Malath was 9 years old. Government troops came to Yar and began shooting and burning everything. Malath grabbed his uncle's hand and fled with one group of people; his parents fled with another group. He never saw his parents again.

Malath spent the next two months walking with his uncle and a growing group of other refugees to a U.N. camp in Ethiopia. They crossed the Nile River and the Sahara Akobo desert to reach Ethiopia.

Malath would spend the next 10 years in refugee camps, cities held by the Sudanese rebels, or slums. He continued his education whenever possible, attending makeshift classes taught by other refugees.

"They said, 'You are the seed of Sudan,'" Malath says. "You need to be educated to help the future of Sudan."

Passage To The U.S.

Malath is quiet when he discusses how close he came to starving to death in 1995. He was 18 years old and living in Kibera, Kenya, one of the largest slums in the world. He can show you a photo of him then, but you almost can't recognize the gaunt, emaciated face staring back.

He and another boy rented a shack for \$1.25 a month. He was malnourished and sickly, but also hopeful. A cousin had moved to the U.S. the year before; that meant once Malath cleared a medical screening to prove he did not have HIV, he would be allowed to move to the U.S. as a Sudanese refugee.

'When I'm about to give up, I just push myself harder. It's at that moment you are so close to success.'

Western business students Nick Maguire, left, and Justin Huerter, right, take a study break with classmate Ater Malath, center. Malath says Huerter was his first friend at Western.



Meanwhile, Malath's uncle, now working with the U.N., informed him that his father had died, but his mother was living in a village in Sudan – and had given birth to three of Malath's siblings, Mary, Martha and Peter. The uncle took Malath's photo to them; it was the only way his mother, brother and sisters would know he was alive.

Malath passed the medical screening and boarded a flight to the U.S. in September 1995. His first stop: Fargo, N.D., and a grueling job at a meat-packing plant. He bounced from Nashville, Tenn., to Mississippi, where he enrolled in Job Corps, got a GED and graduated from a trade school.

He moved to Seattle in 2000 and began studying at a community college, relieved to be once again following in his father's footsteps to an education.

But the war again caught up with him. The following year, Malath learned his mother had died and Mary, Martha and Peter were fending for themselves in a Ugandan refugee camp where rape and other violence were common. Malath dropped out of school to support them in an apartment in Kampala, Uganda's capital.

While he worked 90-plus hours a week, Malath struggled to bring his siblings to live with him in Seattle. It would take five years of frustrating bureaucratic confusion, tearful long distance phone calls and a heartbreaking "No" by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security before he would first lay eyes on his sisters and brother at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Peter now tall and lean like his big brother.

The family reunited, Malath resumed his studies at Seattle Central Community College and transferred to Western in 2008. The transition was tough, but he found help from Student Outreach Services, which provides academic advising and support for underrepresented students at Western. They helped him register for classes, get adjusted to university life, and overcome his struggles with timed testing.

"They helped me through," Malath says. "Without that office I didn't know (how) I would handle everything."

A business student, Malath says one of his most valuable classes has been operations management, which he took in spring 2011 from Instructor Scott Roberts.

Malath says Roberts offered students his personal phone number and email address; as an ESL student who often needs additional instruction or explanation, Malath says he really appreciated that gesture.

"As a professor, you don't have to give your personal phone and email," Malath says. "(Scott) said, 'Don't hesitate to call me in your free time.' He was awesome."

Malath says he has adjusted well to college life in Bellingham, and he enjoys Western's multiculturalism, environment and atmosphere. While he had only one friend at first, his quick smile and easy laugh have helped him make many.

And following the path Malath blazed, his siblings are also

pursuing college degrees. Peter is a student at Central Washington University, while Martha and Mary are studying at community colleges in south Seattle.

The Future

Malath's painful memories from southern Sudan are growing distant, depicting a country that no longer exists. The war ended with a peace agreement in 2005. In January, Malath traveled to Seattle to cast his vote for independence along with millions of other South Sudanese people voting in the U.S. and Africa.

After the vote, Malath was glued to CNN for the election results, talking excitedly of the hardships he had overcome to witness this moment, of the potential of his native country, and of his future there.

The results were announced in February: More than 99 percent of citizens approved independence. After hearing the results, Malath's body language embodied the confidence and excitement shared by millions of his fellow citizens.

"We won!" Malath shouted, pumping his fist in the air.

South Sudan is taking its first steps in self-governance, and while the country remains one of the poorest and least literate in the world, its people are full of hope. Malath's hometown of Rumbek is now the new country's administrative capital. As soon as he graduates in 2012, Malath plans to return home and visit relatives he hasn't seen in decades.

If South Sudan remains stable, Malath says he hopes to use his degree to own or manage a business there. He says he has something that will put him apart from other businessmen – an education from Western Washington University.

"Even now, if I go to South Sudan I will see an opportunity there," Malath says. "I can create a small business and it will be successful because of my critical thinking skills. People there have money but they don't know how to invest it."

Now that you know Malath's story, hear why he's so ready to tell it.

"So other people can put themselves in my shoes," Malath says. "I want to inspire people. When I'm about to give up, I just push myself harder. It's at that moment you are so close to success."

Peter Jensen (10 Journalism) has helped Ater Malath document a portion of his story in a book about his life. He also counts himself as one of the friends Malath made in Bellingham.

A tearful phone call from his little sister in Uganda told Ater Malath the Department of Homeland Security had denied his three teen-age siblings' application to come to the U.S.

"I broke down," Malath says. "Tears were dripping down my face. I did not show emotion on the phone. I said, 'Mary, it's not over. I am going to find some other way to bring you here.'"

Read more at
www.wvu.edu/window

Meet the new Alumni board members

The Western Alumni Association Board of Directors has become an increasingly diverse group of accomplished alumni. The eight individuals who began their terms July 1 helped make the 30-member board more inclusive among gender, age groups, class years, ethnicity and geographical locations.

New members are:



Name: Victor Cruz ('81)
Location: Benton City
Major: Industrial Technology
Second life: After an engineering career with Westinghouse, he founded a winery, Cañon de Sol.
Grape wisdom: "Education opened many doors for me and gave me the opportunity to take a risk in the wine industry."
Western duo: He is married to Kim Douglas Cruz ('81).



Name: Stephanie Artino ('98)
Location: Bellingham
Major: Accounting
Day job: CPA/principal with Metcalf Hodges P.S.
An edge from Western: "The business school at Western [gives] graduates a good pass rate for the CPA exam."
Western's campus is: "Beautiful to walk through, even in the wind and rain. It's what made me fall in love with Bellingham and not want to leave."



Name: Tracy Bundy ('88)
Location: Sammamish
Major: Business Finance
Working woman: Retired Boeing systems analyst; now volunteers with kids' schools.
All in the family: Father Gary Leyritz ('66) and husband Ron Bundy ('89) are both alums. Teenage son and daughter – third-generation Vikings?
Sense of place: "I think Bellingham makes Western a unique and special place to go to school."



Name: Derwynn Dominguez ('96)
Location: Seattle
Major: Environmental Policy
Web work: Senior manager of digital media marketing, Tribune Co.
Critical thinking: "The school and community of educators, students and staff helped shape the person and professional I am today."
Giving back: "I feel I owe it to the university to help recruit new students to the 'Western experience,' and also engage and mobilize fellow alumni to participate."



Name: Carese Busby ('95)
Location: Seattle
Major: Finance and Economics
Managing money: Senior mortgage banker and sales manager, Seattle Mortgage Co.
Western provides: "A top-notch education. ... I believe Western draws the best in faculty and staff."
Ask her about: Being a champion figure skater
Fondest Western memory: "When Pearl Jam came and gave a spontaneous performance in Red Square one beautiful spring day."



Name: Luz Gonzalez ('02)
Location: Seattle
Major: Science and Spanish
Healing hands: Pediatrician, Mercer Island Pediatrics
Close to home: A first-generation college graduate, she entertained job offers from around the country, but opted to stay and support her community in Seattle.
Advocacy: After medical school at UW and a residency at Seattle Children's Hospital, she has gained a reputation as a talented physician, family advocate and public speaker.



Name: Shari Campbell ('83)
Location: Sumner
Creative career: Co-owner and vice president of JayRay, a communications and marketing agency in Tacoma.
Fundamentals: "I was fortunate to have really great professors teach me how to write and how to think. I put my Western education into practice almost every day."
WWU Loyalty: One of her two daughters is a junior. Husband Tim is "a UW grad who wishes he'd gone to Western."



Name: Shannon Hutchinson ('06)
Location: Redondo Beach, Calif.
Major: Journalism
Campus activities: President of ASWWU and the Korean Student Association; represented students on the Strategic Planning Committee.
Luxury job: Lexus project manager, Team One, a division of Saatchi & Saatchi
Mad WWU skillz: "I honed my presentation and negotiation skills, as well as confirming my passion for strategic planning and multi-tasking, which I utilize each day."
Secret life: Enthusiastic foodie, blogger and runner.

Each member serves on at least one of the board's eight active committees: Alumni Awards, Community Engagement, Finance, Governance, Legislative, Nominations, Retreat and Scholarship.



HOW DO YOU GET YOUR BLUE ON?

On campus, we wear Western gear on Wednesdays. But you don't have to be in Bellingham to get your blue on.

Allison Gregg, a '97 graduate who works in Decatur, Ala., drove an hour to present a Western scholarship to an incoming freshman she'd never met. Gregg is an online alumni mentor with our Ask! program, and when a presenter was needed for Jennifer Seifried's high school graduation ceremony in Guntersville, Ala., the Western network swung into action. Despite being more than 2,600 miles from Bellingham, two Alabama residents connected through the power of the Western community.

Michael Taggart ('88) got his blue on when he brought his friend **Cary Painter** ('88) by the Alumni House and encouraged him to sign up for a membership. Michael and Cary had classes together at WWU and were best men at each other's weddings. Every year, they make a two-day trip back to Bellingham to visit campus and rekindle old memories. Michael and his wife, **Erica Taggart** ('98), have been lifetime members since 2005; their daughter is a freshman at Western. Michael wanted to make sure his friend stayed connected and enjoy the benefits of Alumni membership.

Bob Harvey isn't even a WWU alumnus, but his wife, **Mary Alice Peterson** ('66), is so he has hosted the annual salmon barbecue in Olympia for the past four years. They also sent their granddaughter Rylee to Western's volleyball camp this summer.

There are so many ways to connect with your Western community: Join the Alumni Association; follow us on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn; volunteer to host an event; serve on a board or committee; offer a student internship or hire a grad; be an Ask! mentor; or give a donation. Most of all, wear your gear and celebrate your Western pride. Get Your Blue On!

By Deborah DeWees Executive Director

When the Western Alumni Association kicked off the Get Your Blue On! campaign in 2008, our intent was to make the community of Western Washington University visible. Western has such a strong, growing community. We designated one day a week as Western Wednesday and encouraged everyone in our community -- near and far -- to fly their colors and show their pride in our university.

Send a note or photo and let me know how you get your blue on!

Just today as I write this on a Wednesday, I met an alumna, Lynsey Jackson ('03), a nurse at St. Joseph Hospital, who shared her WWU story after seeing the logo embroidered on my dress. Western gear makes it easy to connect with other members of our community.



learn more @
www.wwualumni.com

Class Notes

1960 – Gerald Larson (Special Education, Mathematics) was posthumously awarded a Lifetime Achievement award from RE Sources for Sustainable Communities for his advocacy for marine health in the region. He died in January 2011. **Ruggles Larson** (Exercise and Sport Science), retired Dieringer Middle School principal, was the first inductee into the Dieringer Hall of Fame.

1962 – Dick Nicholl (Elementary Education), retired football coach for Mercer Island High School, was added to the Wall of Honor at Northshore School District's Pop Keeney Stadium.

1966 – Cosette Harms (Elementary Education) taught elementary school in Seattle for 20 years and recently returned to Hawaii, where she enjoys kayaking, paddling in outrigger canoes and stand-up paddleboarding.

1969 – George Gleason and his wife Maryan recently traveled across the United States on their two-seater recumbent bicycle. George has handled the scorebook duties at WWU men's basketball games for more than 20 years. **Iain Reekie** (Political Science) became a sales executive for Watermere at Southlake, a senior-living housing development in the Dallas area.

1971 – Terry Buchanan (Special Education, History-Secondary Education; '87, M.A., History) recently completed "Fort Casey: The History of Fort Casey and the Defense of the Pacific Northwest." He gives lectures, slide shows and walking tours about the retired military post.

1973 – William Dietrich (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary, Journalism) retired as assistant professor at Huxley College of the Environment, where he worked with Environmental Journalism students. He was recently named an "Environmental Hero" by RE Sources for Sustainable

Communities. And HarperCollins recently published Dietrich's 10th novel, "Blood of the Reich."

1976 – Paul Simmerly (Business Administration) is an attorney in Bellevue featured in the book, "Blood Feud: The Man who Blew the Whistle on One of the Deadliest Prescription Drugs Ever," (Dutton, 2011) by Kathleen Sharp. The book chronicles the story of Procrit, a popular anemia drug, which was recently the subject of a severe safety warning by the Food and Drug Administration.

1977 – Ray K. Tsuchiyama (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary) became the director of institutional advancement for the University of Hawaii-Maui College. Most recently, he was a senior consultant for Google in Japan.

1978 – Malcolm Berry (M.S., English) recently published his political thriller, "The Foulks Rebellion," set partially in Whatcom County. **Jeff Pontius**

(Geology) joined the board of Redstar Gold Corp.

1979 – Pat Byrne (M.S., Biology) is vice-president of Fatigue Science and works with the Vancouver Canucks NHL team to reduce sleep deprivation on long road trips. **Dale Zender** (Accounting) PeaceHealth's Regional Vice President of Finance and Organizational Integrity Officer, was honored by PeaceHealth with its John Tiscornia Award, recognizing outstanding leadership, stewardship and the exemplification of PeaceHealth values.

1980 – Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mike Edmonson (Music-Performance; '83, M.Mus., Music) became the head of the Marine Corps Music Program, part of Marine Corps Public Affairs located at The Pentagon. Most recently, he served as director of the 1st Marine Division Band at Camp Pendleton, Calif. **Jim Duscha** (Sociology) became chief of the Longview Police Department. He has been an officer with the LPD for

Paul Madison tallies up four decades of career highlights in Western Athletics

By Jim Carberry

As the Western Washington University sports information director the past 45 years, **Paul Madison** ('71, Journalism) has won numerous awards, but none more prestigious than being named to the College Sports Information Directors of America Hall of Fame last June.

"I've enjoyed what I've done throughout," says Madison, who began sports information work in 1966 as an undergrad at Western. "I'm forever grateful I could make a career here."

To honor that career and his part in bringing attention to Western's outstanding coaches, athletes and teams, here is his list of highlights:

Proudest Moment: Watching men's basketball star **Grant Dykstra** ('06, Business Administration-Finance), whose right arm was permanently mangled in a childhood accident, accept the V Foundation Comeback Award, a first for a non-Division I athlete, at the 2006 Viking Night. "What an incredible young man."

Groundbreaking Performance: When the WWU women's basketball team defeated WSU in 1973 to qualify for nationals, it was the first time a Western women's event was given more than a perfunctory paragraph in the local media. "It opened the gates to a whole different era."

Saddest Moment: Two days after leading

the men's basketball team to a dramatic victory over Central in 1992, star **Duke Wallenborn** died in his sleep of abnormal heart rhythm. In the days that followed, Vikings attended his memorial service and competed at district championships. "That two-week period is forever etched in my brain."

Unforgettable Teams: 1971-72, 1987-88 and 2000-01 men's basketball; 1976 and 1996 football; 1985-86, 1995-96 and 1999-2000 women's basketball; seven national champion women's rowing teams; 1989 and 2007 volleyball; 1984 women's soccer; 1998 softball; and 1989 men's soccer.

Most Unbelievable Athletes: **Jo Metzger-Levin** ('81, Physical Education-Secondary; '85, M.Ed., Physical Education) twice was a finalist as the best women's basketball player in the nation (in any division), and was the first Western athlete to be named to the NAIA Hall of Fame. Others are **Pat Locker** ('82, P.E.-Exercise & Sport Science), the first 4,000-yard rusher in the Northwest; **Peter LaBarge** ('91, Recreation), an All-American in both football and soccer; **Orlando Steinauer** ('96, Sociology), a football



Paul Madison ('71), here at a WWU Athletic Hall of Fame Ceremony, has told the story of Western Athletics since 1966.

All-American and now defensive coordinator of the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League; hurdlers **Wendy Taylor** ('74, Physical Education-K-12) and **Mike Vorce** ('74, Environmental Education); **Mike Franza** ('73, Mathematics-Secondary), the Northwest's leading scorer in men's basketball as a senior; **Annette Duvall** ('85, Physical Education-Secondary), who scored 66 career goals in women's soccer; **Ryan Brown** ('11, Kinesiology/Pre Health Care Professions), a four-time national champion pole-vaulter; and 12-time All-American distance runner Sarah Porter, a senior.

"There have been a lot of neat people and so many wonderful memories," said Madison. "I can't do them all justice."

more than 30 years. **Steve Hall** (Public Policy and Administration) is city manager of Olympia.

1982 – Jason Ford (Geography) rode 1,000 alone in a bike from San Diego through the eastern Sierra Nevada mountains. "It was a spectacular two-week tour, with some 60,000 feet of climbing," he reports. Ford also recently moved from San Diego to Austin, Tex.

1981 – Debbie Ahl (Student/Faculty Designed Major), CEO of Sterling Life Insurance Company and Olympic Health Management Systems, Inc., was appointed to the Bellingham Technical College Board of Trustees. **Cori Pfulg-Tilton** (German; '82, German-Secondary Education; '92, M.Ed., School Administration-Secondary) is principal of Snoqualmie Elementary School. She recently earned her superintendent's certificate from Seattle University. **Jeff Craddock** (Business Administration) became a wealth advisor at First Hawaiian Bank in Lihue, Hawaii.

1982 – Christopher Bailey (Business Administration) became president of Lower Columbia College after serving as vice president at Centralia College for six years.

1983 – Violist Clark Potter is an associate professor of Music at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

1984 – Tom Keegan (M.Ed., Adult Education) became president of Skagit Valley College in Mount Vernon. Previously, he served for a decade as president of Peninsula College in Port Angeles. **Dana Rozier** (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary) wrote "Natural Hawai'i: An Inquisitive Kid's Guide," which won an Educational Travel Book of the Year Award from Creative Child Magazine. **Darren Emmons** (Computer Science) is a senior software engineer for OutBack Power Systems in Arlington, which designs and builds renewable energy and "off-the-grid" power systems. **Robyn du Pré** (Environmental Science; '96, M.A., Political Science) was named an "Environmental Hero" by RE Sources for Sustainable Communities in Bellingham. The former executive director for RE Sources, du Pré is now director of outreach and development for the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation.

1985 – Pat Cordle (Accounting) is vice president of field sales for BIC Corp and was inducted into the Convenience Store News Industry Hall of Fame. **Tom Burkett** (Chemistry/Biology) was promoted to professor at Community College of Baltimore County, where he teaches biology. **Jeff Vaughn** (Physical Education-Secondary Education; '90, M.Ed., Secondary School Administration) was named interim principal of Bellingham High School.

He replaces **Steve Clarke** (Speech-Secondary; '91, M.Ed., Secondary School Administration), who became executive director of teaching and learning for the Bellingham School District after serving as principal at Bellingham High for 11 years.

1987 – Doug Mah (Sociology-Criminology; '89, M.A., Sociology) is nearing the end of 10 years on the Olympia City Council, including four years as mayor. **Bonnie Bennett** (M.Ed., Student Personnel Administration) retired after 24 years as a counselor at Kansas City Kansas Community College.

1988 – Lyle Forde (M.Ed., Curriculum Consultant, Secondary Education) recently retired from 35 years of vocal music at Arlington High School. His retirement party included a tribute concert with performances from alumni, singing songs Ford had taught them. **Tim "Dewey" DeJong** (Political Science), who practices intellectual property litigation at Stoll Berne in Portland, Ore. was named one of the "Top 50 Oregon Super Lawyers" by Super Lawyers magazine.

1989 – Susan Wilson (Recreation) became interim associate dean of the School of Education at the State University of New York at Cortland. **James E. Johnson** (Fairhaven College interdisciplinary concentration) became athletic director and head men's basketball coach at Pasco-Hernando Community College in Florida. Most recently, he was basketball coach and athletic director of Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Ark.

1990 – Kristy Edmunds (M.A., Theatre) became executive and artistic director of UCLA Live performing arts series at the University of California, Los Angeles. Previously, she was artistic director of the Melbourne International Arts Festival in Australia. **Salley Hewitt** (Art) retired as editor of Whatcom Watch, an environmental newspaper in Bellingham, and has returned to concentrating on her artwork. **Michael Gadwell** (Industrial Technology) is engineering director and part owner of Cashmere Molding in Woodinville.

1991 – Ismael Vivanco (Spanish) earned his superintendent's certificate and doctorate of education from Washington State University. He's the director of the migrant program for the North Central Educational Service District in Wenatchee. **John Belcher** (Biology; '95, M.Ed., Secondary Education) became principal of Mount Si High School after serving as principal of Omak High School. The Renton Municipal Arts Commission exhibited the works of **David Shenk** (Industrial

Technology) this year at the Carco Theatre. Shenk is a metal sculptor who uses a 2.5-ton power hammer to sculpt thick sheets of metal into forms of the human face. **Eric Schurman** (Business Administration) is a criminal defense attorney in Seattle. **Amy Swainson-Brown** (Humanities) is a corporate travel agent.

1992 – Shawn Hunstock (Accounting) became the finance director for the city of Edmonds. **Michael Brown** (Political Science) is a sales manager at Nike in Oregon. **Tina Sweeten** (Anthropology) became executive director of the Columbus Arts Council in Columbus, Miss. **Joseph Huang** (Computer Science) became enterprise resource planning systems analyst for Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn.

1993 – Christine Rojas Cook (M.S., Psychology) is an assistant professor of Education and Counseling at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where she earned her doctorate. **Andy McGrath** (M.Ed., School Administration) became principal of Cedar River Middle School in Maple Valley. **Karen Keith** (Mathematics; '93, M.Ed., Secondary Education) is a mathematics and geometry teacher at Arlington High School as well as an artist.

1994 – Kathleen Nuzum (History) is a History instructor at Western and the 2011 winner of the Ronald Kleinknecht Excellence in Teaching Award. **Mark Zollitsch** (P.E.: Fitness and Exercise Science; '02, M.Ed., Secondary Education/Health and Physical Education) became Wellness National Practice Lead for Wells Fargo Insurance Services, USA. **Paul R. Arntson** (Electronics Engineering Technology), a materials, process and physics engineer at The Boeing Co., won a Special Invention Award from the company for his work on the team that invented "Adaptive Thrust Sensor Drilling." **Ellen Kuhlmann** (M.S., Biology) is the Seeds of Success program manager for the Rare Plant Care and Conservation program at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens. Seeds of Success collects wild plant seeds for the Kew Millennium Seed Bank in the U.K. and for the U.S. National Native Plant Materials Program. **Kim Burkhardt** (Fairhaven Upside-Down Program) founded the National Coalition of Community-Based Correctional and Community Re-Entry Service Organizations.

1995 – Jaime Crawford (Marine Biology) became an applied technology managing associate in the Redmond office of GeoEngineers, Inc. **John Patton** (Physical Education-Secondary; '05, M.Ed., School Administration-Secondary) became principal of South

Whidbey High School. **Todd Kingston** (Communication) became senior product specialist at Premier Blue Cross in Mountlake Terrace.

1996 – Orlando Steinauer (Sociology) became the defensive coordinator for the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League. **Jason Jordan** (Economics) became the environmental programs director at the Port of Tacoma. **Ian Miller** (Environmental Science-Marine Ecology) is a doctoral candidate in ocean sciences at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He is also the Washington Sea Grant coastal hazards specialist on the Olympic Peninsula. **Matt Bazemore** (Art) is a professional artist in Ballard. **Ron Buch** (Communication, Political Science) is pastor of the Aledo Church of Christ in Aledo, Tex. **Eric Cahan** (English-Secondary, Principal's Initial Certificate) became principal of Lake Stevens High School. **Rebecca Richardson** (History) earned a master's degree in Library Science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

1997 – Marine biologist Chris Wojcik (M.S., Biology) is leading an effort to sink a 40-foot sculpture of a horseshoe crab off the coast of New Jersey to become an artificial reef protecting marine habitat. He is also president Ionature, which creates exhibits and habitats for zoos and aquariums. **Genevieve Robertson** (English-Writing) lives in San Francisco where her business, Lightbox SF, specializes in marketing and support for artists. **Mike Ho** (M.Ed., Student Personnel Administration) is director of Student Life at Paradise Valley Community College in Phoenix. **Eric Johnson** (Spanish, Anthropology) earned a doctorate from Arizona State University and is now an assistant professor of bilingual/ESL education at Washington State University. He was elected to the American Anthropological Association's Committee for Human Rights. **Nicole Talley** (Child Development; '04, M.Ed., School Administration) became principal of Silver Beach Elementary School in Bellingham.

1998 – Kathryn Aalto (M.S., English) moved to England in 2007 and earned a diploma from the London College of Garden Design as well as a master's degree in Garden History from the University of Bristol. She now designs gardens in the U.K. and U.S. and created an exhibition for the Garden Museum in London. **Shawn Larsen-Bright** (Philosophy) is a partner with the law practice of Dorsey and Whitney LLP. Washington Law and Politics Magazine named him a "Rising Star" in 2010 in the area of business litigation. **Kristopher McDaniel** (Philosophy) became an

associate professor of Philosophy at Syracuse University. **Heidi Swenland Hubler** (Special Education) is a first- and second-grade teacher at Lake Tapps Elementary. She's also a triathlete who competed this year in the Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Henderson, Nev. **Micah Smith** (Spanish; '02, Education Certificate; '09, Principal's Certificate) became co-principal of Birchwood Elementary School in Bellingham. She'll take over the full position in fall 2012.

1999 – Krista Lucas (Child Development) completed her doctorate at Boston College, where she was a recent recipient of the Donald T. White Teaching Excellence Award, which recognizes outstanding teaching by graduate students. **Janet Marino** (Political Science) became executive director of the Whatcom Peace and Justice Center. **Karen Barker** (Physical Education-K-12) became principal of Emily Dickinson Elementary and Explorer Community School in Redmond. **Marty Lang** (M.Ed., Secondary Education) became principal of Eagle River High School in Anchorage, Alaska.

2000 – Doug Thomason (Business Administration-Marketing) became a senior project manager at The Martin Agency, an advertising agency based in Richmond, Va. **Sarah Jio's** (Journalism-Public Relations) first novel, "The Violets of March," was published in spring 2011 by the Penguin Group and is set in Bainbridge Island. Her second novel, "The Bungalow," will be published next year and she's at work on a third. **Courtney (Hughes) McKlveen** (Political Science) is a sales director at Yahoo!. **Thomas Gresham** (Earth Science-Elementary; '07, M.Ed., Educational Administration; '09, Principal's Certificate) became principal of Columbia Elementary School in Bellingham. Master Sgt. **Carl Bjornstal** (History) has completed 21 years of military service on active, guard and reserve time, including five deployments. He recently returned from his second deployment to Iraq and plans to "venture into higher education and college coaching" near the Twin Cities, Minnesota.

2001 – Dwight Seferos (Chemistry) is an assistant professor of Chemistry

at the University of Toronto, where he received a DuPont Young Professor award. Seferos hopes to use the award's \$75,000 grant to continue his research of conjugated polymers and improving solar cell technology. **Sonja Hinz** (Anthropology) has studied dance in Hawaii, London, Norway and Tajikistan and owns the La Vida dance studio in Bellingham. She is a scholar and performer of Central Asian dance. **Josh Mulkey** (Computer Science) became a software engineer with DAT/EM Systems International in Anchorage, Alaska. **Brad Tuininga** (Student/Faculty Designed Major; '05, M.Ed., Natural Sciences/Science Education) is development director for the Bellingham Technical College Foundation, where he also teaches courses in Sustainability Fundamentals and helped develop the Sustainable Energy Certificate. **Travis Sipher** (Music) is a music teacher at Kulshan Middle School in Bellingham, a cellist in the Whatcom Symphony Orchestra and conductor of the North Sound Community Orchestra. **Nate Fancher** (Special Education) became principal of St. Cloud High School in Florida.

2002 – Marta Taggart (English) is teaching English in Romania as a Peace Corps volunteer. She joined more than 50 other Peace Corps volunteers to build a house in six days with Habitat for Humanity/Romania. **Brooke McClary** (English-Writing) joined the Web marketing department at Big Fresh Media in Bellingham.

2003 – Adam Greene (Business Administration-Marketing) is U.S. marketing manager at Scott Sports. **Wesley Foreman** (Sociology) earned his law degree from Gonzaga University.

2004 – Joel Waage (Theatre) directed "This is not the Play" for the Mad Dog Theatre Company in New York City. **David Hornreich** (Theatre) is an actor, director, playwright and improviser in Chicago. **Keith Judelman** (Anthropology) is an East Asian Medicine practitioner and acupuncturist in Seattle. Little, Brown and Co. published "The Terror of Living," the debut novel by **Urban Waite** (M.A., English). The thriller, set in the Pacific Northwest, was called "a hell of a good novel," by Stephen King. **Ailey Kaiser Hughes** (English-Creative Writing) won a 2011-12 Fulbright U.S. Student Program scholarship to spend 10 months in Kyrgyzstan studying women's land rights. **Allison Ilgenfritz-Hall** (Political Science) is a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher at Renton Academy and was named a Teacher of the Month by the Renton Rotary Club. **Sonya Dunning** (English-Creative Writing), a graduate student at the University of Idaho,



Alumna's listening, persistence pay off in tribe's journey to marriage equality

By Peter Jensen ('10)

Heather Purser ('08, English-Creative Writing), a Seattle-based commercial diver and Suquamish Tribe member, successfully lobbied her tribe to make same-sex marriage legal in August 2011. The Kitsap County tribe, with 1,000 members, is the first in Washington state to legally recognize same-sex marriage, according to The Seattle Times.

Purser came out as a lesbian while at Western and, after graduating, spent three years working with her tribe on same-sex marriage. She recently spoke to Window about the experience.

"I was really scared about being gay. When I got to Western, people were accepting and open. I decided to bring the comfort and compassion I felt at Western home with me. My tribe is supposed to be very open and accepting. I wanted us to prove that by accepting me."

Lessons from the experience: "I think I learned a lot about how to speak up for myself, and to not back down. I had a lot of people who were supportive, but they wouldn't come support me so I had to talk to the council by myself."

Finally a breakthrough: "For a long time I didn't think it would happen. It wasn't until March of this year (at an annual tribal meeting) I decided to get up in front of everybody in the tribe and ask them for the permission to do this. After that it was fast-tracked."

Reaction to success: "I was a little bit shocked. I didn't think everybody would say yes. It still kind of makes me choked up thinking about it. I had never been more proud to be a Suquamish person in my life."

On winning support: "I try to listen really well and establish a connection. Then I tell them my side. I find that they usually listen...and after that they usually get it. I think (same-sex marriage) is all about personal happiness. It doesn't make any sense that we wouldn't have the same rights as any other American."

Moscow, had an essay published in the journal Creative Nonfiction after winning a national contest. Dunning hopes to develop the essay, "for(e)closure," into a book-length memoir

2005 – Janae Hodge (M.Ed. School Administration, Secondary; '08,

Principal's Initial Certificate) became an assistant principal at Shuksan Middle School in Bellingham. **Amy Montanye-Johnson** (Principal's Initial Certificate) became principal of Two Rivers School in North Bend. **Shieva Kleinschmidt** (Philosophy) became

Class Notes are compiled from published accounts, press releases and information submitted by alumni themselves. Notes are edited for style, clarity and length and are published as space allows. For more information, or to submit your own information for Class Notes, e-mail Mary.Gallagher@wwu.edu.

WHO'S CALLING FROM WWU?

When a WWU student calls during the annual Phonathon, take a moment to pick up the phone and chat with someone who is walking in your footsteps.



Greg Phelps:

Sophomore, Pullman resident,
WWU Phonathon caller

Major:

Computer Science

Favorite place to study on campus:

The private Computer Science computer lab in the Communication building – the lab is only available to Computer Science majors.

Best place to go in Bellingham:

Anywhere on the waterfront! I grew up surrounded by wheat fields and now that I live near the water I can't get enough of it.

Amount raised for Western to date:

Just under \$4,000 so far – this is my first quarter as a Phonathon caller.

Favorite Phonathon conversation:

Once I spoke to an alumnus with a Computer Science degree who told me he attended Western before the programming languages I'm learning were even invented. He said that for one of his classes he proved his expertise in computer security to his professor by changing the grades of everyone in the class.

Future plans:

I hope to use my degree in Computer Science to land a job at a company like Microsoft or Google. I want to work in the tech industry and continue to do improv comedy in my off time, something I'm very passionate about! I am currently involved with Western's Dead Parrots Society and it would be a dream come true to continue my improv work with the Upright Citizens Brigade or Second City after I graduate from WWU.

Why he hopes you'll pick up the phone:

Talking to alumni about their time here is the best part of my job. I get to tell alumni about current events on campus and hear what it was like when they attended WWU. One of the main reasons we call is simply to connect with alumni – I hope you'll pick up the phone and chat!

Class Notes

an assistant professor at the University of Southern California. The Seattle International Film Festival in May screened "Do you see Colors When You Close Your Eyes?" directed by **Caleb Young** (English-Creative Writing).

2006 – Sun McElderry (Fairhaven Interdisciplinary Concentration) became director of communications and content for Framework:CR, a consulting firm that helps clients integrate sustainability principles into their business strategies. **Andy Olson** (Sport Psychology) became the head coach for the Spokane Shock, which is part of the Arena Football League. Flux Books recently published "Skyship Academy: The Pearl Wars," the debut novel by **Nick James** (English-Elementary). **BreeAnn Gale** (Business Administration-Marketing) owns Pink Blossom Events in the Seattle area and is regional director of Wedding Network USA. **Nate Kaemingk** (Industrial Technology-Vehicle Design) co-owns Dan's Automotive, a Bellingham service and repair center, which recently moved to a larger location after achieving 74-percent growth during its second year of business. **Candice Brehm** (Business Administration-Marketing) became the director of marketing for Fixed Fee IT in Beaverton, Ore. **Robert Knapp** (Environmental Science; '09, M.S., Environmental Science) is a long range planner for Clallam County.

2007 – Joel Stedman (Economics) recently purchased The Magnolia Village Pub, a sports bar in Seattle, with his family. **Darryl E. Colman** (Spanish, History) earned his law degree from Gonzaga University and became an associate with Walstead Mertsching PS in Longview. **Dave Ryan** (English-Creative Writing) is an artist in Bremerton, specializing in stencils and mosaics. He's

the owner of Manticore Stencil Art. **Jason Labaw** (Business Administration-Marketing) is Chief Executive Officer of Bonsai Media Group, an Internet marketing and web development company that also employs **Ryan Markham** ('10, M.B.A.) as a project manager and **Jon Kiser** ('10, Business Administration-Marketing) as an Internet marketing specialist.

2008 – Rob Camandona (Philosophy) became executive director of the Downtown Bellingham Partnership. **Ryan Babcock** (Art-Painting) is an artist in Spokane. **Jacob Lippold** (Political Science) became the assistant golf professional at Salish Cliffs Golf Club, a new course in Shelton. **Luke Vanderzyden** (M.Ed., Student Affairs Administration) became a student engagement coordinator for Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa.

2009 – Darren O'Donnell (Economics/Accounting) spent the summer of 2011 bicycling 10,500 miles to all 30 major league baseball parks. **Morgan Parkerson** (Pre-Physical Therapy) played for Great Britain at the World Cup of Softball in July. **Isabelle Dills** (Journalism) became the education and health reporter at the Napa Valley Register in California. **Kera Wanielista** (Journalism) reports on Bellingham for KOMO TV-News' website. **Caleb Dobey** (Geology) was a member of a Washington Conservation Corps crew dispatched to Joplin, Mo., soon after the deadly tornados last spring. **Bill Stark** (French) is completing his master's degree in Spanish from the University of Rhode Island. He will present, "Two Women Across the Cultural Divide: the Tolerance of Intolerance" his comparative study of Anne Hutchinson and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, at the New England American Studies Association

Conference this fall. **Mallory Hayes** (Accounting) received her certified public accountant certification and license.

2010 – Alexander "A.J." Garcia (Politics/Philosophy/Economics) was awarded a Dwight David Eisenhower Graduate Transportation Fellowship from the Federal Highway Administration. He's a graduate student at Florida State University, pursuing a master's in Urban and Regional Planning and will intern in summer 2012 with TriMet, the public transportation agency in Portland, Ore. **Kimberly Hawes** (M.Ed., Educational Administration; Principal's Initial Certificate) became interim principal of Eagleridge Elementary School in Ferndale. **Audrey Coon** (Spanish - Elementary) became the assistant coach for the women's rowing team at the University of Portland. **Carson Johnston** (Design) became the multi-media and special events coordinator for the Sun Valley Marketing Alliance in Idaho. **Jenny Owre** (English-Literature) became a Peace Corps volunteer, with an assignment to teach English in Ukraine, where **Erika Hornli** (Elementary Education Studies) is also teaching English with the Peace Corps. **Ellen Teel** (Human Services) is a member of Teach For America, teaching a class of third-graders at Olinder Elementary School in San Jose, Calif. **Annie Kruger** (Music-Performance) was selected to perform a lead role in Mozart's "Così fan tutte" with the Lyric Opera Studio in Weimar, Germany. After graduation, **Christopher Kong** (Business Administration-Marketing) spent several months working and learning at restaurants in Malaysia. He has returned to Seattle to his family's Italian restaurant, Perché No, where he offers monthly "Malaysian and Thai Nights." **Salina Marth** (Special

Education+Elementary) became a fifth-grade teacher at North Bend Elementary School, where she was once a fifth-grader herself. She told the Snohomish Valley Star that her old school's gymnasium "smells exactly the same."

2011 – Christina Lum (General Science-Elementary) was selected for the World Teach program for a year of service as a science teacher in the Federated States of Micronesia. **Michael Duty** (General Studies) played his rookie season as a forward with the Bellingham Slam. **Ian Watson** (Business Administration-Management) joined the sales team at MyBinding.com.

Marriages and Unions

Candace Marie Koski ('10, Business Administration-Management) and **Christopher Mark Lyle**, on July 29, 2011, in West Seattle.

Hanna Maria Lindberg and **Karl Richard Peterson** ('10, Master in Teaching) on June 23, 2011, in Sigtuna, Sweden.

Did you make it official? Let us know!

If you recently got married or entered into a domestic partnership, share your news with us so we can include it in "Marriages and Unions."

Email your news, including your names, class years, and the date and place of your marriage or union, to Mary.Gallagher@wwu.edu.

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Kimberly Radke ('06, Sociology, Communication Sciences and Disorders) and Justin Livingston on Sept. 17, 2011, near Wenatchee.

Mandi Elizabeth Malecki ('04, Business Administration-Marketing) and Sean Travis Edwards on Jan. 15, 2011, in Portland, Ore.

Jeanette Brizendine ('03, Chemistry and Economics) and **Trent Jurgensen** ('03, Business Administration-Human Resources Management) on Jan. 24, 2011 in Hawaii.

Michelle Brown ('03, Linguistics) and Alexander Rich on May 28, 2011, in North Bend.

Obituaries

1928 – Louise Edmundson, 104, a musician and retired teacher, on March 1, 2011.

1933 – Phillip Thomas Campbell, 96, a retired seafood company executive, on Jan. 29, 2011, in Edmonds.

1934 – Margaret Jean Watts, 93, on Jan. 17, 2011. **Alice Jean Donaway Jorg**, 96, on April 26, 2008.

1938 – Elizabeth Alpaugh, 93, on Feb. 10, 2011.

1940 – Geraldine E. Allen, 90, a retired employee of the Department of Social and Health Services, on March 26, 2011, in Kingston. **Francelia B. Radcliffe**, 90, a retired teacher, on February 3, 2011. **Harry "Duff" Sutherland**, 83, on March 19, 2011, in Seattle.

1944 – Patricia Maxine Bright Peterson, 84, a retired Boeing employee, on March 20, 2011, in Skyway.

1945 – Cheryl Bickford, 87, a retired teacher active in the Daughters of the Pioneers Washington, on April 20, 2011.

1946 – Frances Monita Johansen, 90, on March 19, 2011, in Lynden.

1947 – Harlan S. Kelley, 83, a retired logger and insurance agent, on March 24, 2011 in Bellingham. **Robert Haugen**, 92, on March 31, 2011, in Lynden.

1948 – Bette Reed, 88, a retired teacher, writer and volunteer, on June 3, 2011.

1951 – James Randall Lafond, 71, a retired science teacher, elementary school principal, school superintendent and volunteer firefighter, on Jan. 26, 2011, in Whatcom County.

1952 – Laurence Arthur Stephan, 84, a retired teacher, coach and high school principal, on March 12, 2011, in Bellingham.

1956 – Alan Amsberry, 81, who owned a store in Blaine and worked for U.S. Immigration, on March 29, 2011, in

Blaine. **Charlotte E. Day**, 90, a retired teacher and artist, on April 24, 2011.

1957 – Hugh McEwen Gregory, 65, an engineering supervisor, on March 22, 2011, in Bellingham. **William M. Jolley**, 83, on May 29, 2011, in Bellingham.

1958 – Ray Martyn, 80, a retired music teacher, on Dec. 28, 2010. **Dorothy Vivian Donaway Nelson**, 95, a retired teacher, on Nov. 9, 2008, in Richland.

1959 – Craig Garrett Davis, 76, an attorney who once argued a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, on April 23, 2011, in Bellingham. **Helen Irene Lade**, 92, a long-time first-grade teacher in Lynden, on March 15, 2011.

1960 – William H. Hunt, 88, who owned a chain of travel agencies in Seattle and was active in the worldwide development of the travel and tourism industry, on Feb. 22, 2011.

1961 – Marlys Jensen, 71, a retired educator, on May 19, 2011. **George St. Pierre**, 83, who taught school in Tacoma for 24 years, on Jan. 23, 2008. **Robert Steen**, 72, a longtime teacher in the Longview School District, on June 10, 2011.

1962 – John R. Buchmeier, 66, on Jan. 6, 2011.

1963 – Marvel L. Hughes, 89, a retired teacher, on March 16, 2011. **Randall Reece**, 70, a retired FAA employee, on June 8, 2011.

1964 – Audrey Knutsen, 84, a retired special education teacher, on April 20, 2011. **Gwen M. Lennon**, 68, a retired IBM employee and resident of Bellingham, on Jan. 12, 2011, in Buenos Aires. **Margaret Jean Simmons**, 68, a retired teacher in the Edmonds School District, on Jan. 6, 2011.

1966 – Kenneth Edward Backman, 78, on April 10, 2011, a retired Boeing employee, in Bellingham. **Idris Oiness**, 66, on Feb. 4, 2011.

1967 – Janet Cimino, 67, an art enthusiast who left her art collection and gallery to the community, on Aug. 2, 2011, in Wahkiakum County.

1968 – Daniel Thomas Baker, 65, a retired teacher in Bremerton junior high schools, on July 8, 2011.

1970 – Paul Hanson, 63, founder and longtime principal of Valley Christian High School in Brownsville, Texas, on April 9, 2011. **Kathleen Roseburg**, 64, a longtime first- and second-grade teacher in East Wenatchee, on July 11, 2011, in Louisville, Ky.

1972 – Joseph LaVelle German, 85, retired pharmacist and drug store owner in Carnation, on Feb. 1, 2011. **Arthur Lee Rose**, 66, on April 17, 2011, in Phoenix, Ariz. He worked in

accounting and in the marine and computer industries.

1973 – Sandra Lee (Anderson) Pascua, 59, a longtime kindergarten teacher with Sunnyside Public Schools, on May 2, 2011, in Sunnyside. **Laura Jean Zook**, 71, a retired Boeing employee, on June 14, 2011, in Pasadena, Calif.

1974 – Ruby Armstrong, 81, a Master Gardner and retired supervisor for Catholic Community Services, on March 22, 2011, in Everett. **Albert Walcott**, 63, a financial consultant and former Meridian School Board member, on April 28, 2011, in Bellingham.

1975 – Thomas Wayne Bowhay, 55, an entrepreneur and founder of the Odyssey Enterprises seafood company, on March 28, 2011, in Woodinville.

1976 – Nancy Gerner, 65, a former store owner and purchasing manager for the Bellingham School District, on June 21, 2011. **James William Johnson**, 57, president of the Wanke Cascade floor covering company and an avid boater, on Sept. 19, 2011, in Kirkland. **Frances Evelyn Petersen**, 93, a retired social worker, on Sept. 2, 2011, on Bainbridge Island.

1979 – Thomas Steven Brown, 57, a retired accountant and business executive, on April 26, 2011.

1980 – Sherri Ann Angie, 54, an artist and former special education teacher, on Feb. 5, 2011, in Bellingham.

1981 – Mikell Delaney, 71, on Feb. 23, 2011. **Gregory Scot Phillips**, 54, a skilled carpenter, on Jan. 31, 2011.

1984 – Linda Joyce Beck, 65, a retired physical therapist and master quilter, on May 22, 2011. **Melissa Youssefi**, 48, on March 13, 2011, in Seattle.

1986 – Philip F. Rising, 69, a Navy veteran who worked as a personal trainer for the city of Houston for 20 years, on Nov. 20, 2010.

1985 – Billie "Jean" Dustin, 75, a retired teacher and volunteer, on March 29, 2011, in Bellingham.

1992 – State Sen. Scott White, 41, who represented the 46th District in northern Seattle, serving as the state Senate's majority whip and vice chair of the Transportation Committee, on Oct. 21, 2011.

1996 – Arlene Marjorie Faulds Adolphson, 92, a retired medical technologist who established a clinical chemistry laboratory in Bellingham, on Jan. 4, 2011.

1997 – Allen Wade Cramer, 43, a marine biologist, on July 5, 2011, in Toledo, Ore.

1998 – Dennis R. Hultman, 62, a retired logistics manager, on Oct. 15, 2011.

2002 – Jesse Holman Burnett, 33, a musician, actor, director, playwright, chef and bookstore owner, on May 20, 2011.

Faculty and Staff

Hugh Fleetwood, 81, associate professor emeritus of Philosophy, on July 17, 2011. In addition to his work at Western, Dr. Fleetwood was also served on the board of the Interfaith Coalition and as president of the Washington State American Civil Liberties Union.

Harley Hiller, 83, professor emeritus of History, on Oct. 5, 2011. Dr. Hiller taught U.S., Latin American and Canadian history for more than 35 years. He was also served in ministry positions in the Presbyterian church and was president of the board for Love INC., a Whatcom County ministry serving those in need.

Andrew Hoskinson, 60, who worked at Western from 1997 to 2008, on June 23, 2011. Mr. Hoskinson, who retired from the President/Provost's office, was also a talented wood carver, musician and poet.

Evelyn "Pete" Mason, 86, professor emeritus of Psychology, on July 13, 2011. Dr. Mason co-founded the first mental health clinic in the Bellingham area and directed Project Catch-Up, a program to help disadvantaged youth continue their education.

Frederick Alfred Olsen, 86, professor emeritus of Technology, on February 8, 2011. Dr. Olsen also coached Western's handball team and designed and built three houses.

Marvin L. Olmstead, 81, associate professor emeritus of Communication, on Jan. 16, 2011.

Ethan Rimmel, 41, an associate professor of Developmental Psychology, on June 13, 2011, 10 days after teaching his last class and a year after being diagnosed with terminal cancer.

James Scott, 85, professor emeritus of Geography, on July 20, 2011. In addition to his research on the settlement and economic development of the Pacific Northwest, Dr. Scott was a founder of the Center for Pacific Northwest Studies. Days before he died, Dr. Scott dictated a letter, "Hymn and Praise for Students," which can be found at www.wvu.edu/window. A celebration of his life is planned for 2012. Email janet.collins2@gmail.com for more information or if you have memories to share.



Flames of autumn

Photos by
Rhys Logan



Western's women's rugby team, the Western Flames, came within sight of a national championship last year, losing to Radcliffe College in the Division II semifinals. And though about half of last year's starting players have graduated, this year's team hasn't ruled out a return trip to nationals this spring, says Kirsten Schumacher, president of the club team.

Like many players, Schumacher was drawn to the game's intensity but has come to love the team's devotion to each other. "The best part about Flames rugby is you join the team and you have 40 new best friends," she says.

Rhys Logan, an intern with Western's University Communications office, will graduate in December with a degree in Visual Journalism. His work has appeared in Seattle Metropolitan, NationalGeographic.com, Climbing.com and several outdoor adventure blogs.



“IF you enjoyed your experience as a student, come see what additional benefits are available to you as a Western alumnus. For us, they are very rewarding.”

– Jerry

Jerry ('75) & Truc ('82, '85) Thon

Life members of the Western Alumni Association since 2011

President, Western Foundation Board of Directors

A Bellingham native, Jerry went to Western with the idea of becoming a gym teacher. But summer jobs in Alaska brought other opportunities including building a successful, integrated fish processing company called New West Fisheries. When not in Carver Gym cheering on Western's student-athletes, Jerry enjoys extended motorcycle trips with his friends. For Jerry and Truc, focus on family is important. Western is included in their definition of family and gets a good share of their time and support. "The connections with students and faculty are rewarding and give us great personal fulfillment."

Alumni Chair, WWU College of Sciences & Technology Dean's Advisory Board

Truc came from her native Saigon, Vietnam to grow up in Bellingham and receive her BS and MS in Chemistry from Western. Spending much time in the science labs, she remembers fondly and with high regard the great Chemistry Department faculty. Since then she has been an active volunteer on campus and in the community. Truc's passion for physical fitness includes running, yoga, aerobics and most recently ballet classes at Western. Truc and Jerry met at a Bellingham garage sale one lucky weekend a few years after graduation.

Membership Matters





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Western's Microsoft Connection

Julie Larson-Green ('86),
Brian Daugherty ('84) and
Keith Boyd ('95) are among
the hundreds of Western
alumni making a difference
at Microsoft

Photo by Mark Malijan ('09)
/The Emerald Collective



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